THE DISCOURSE OF NEOLIBERALISM

AN ANATOMY OF A POWERFUL IDEA

Simon Springer

The Discourse of Neoliberalism

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For my Mom, who held me on a rocking chair when the trials of the day became too much for a child. Your embrace proved to me again and again that strength comes from connection.

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Introduction

Neoliberalism: Descanting the Insalubrious

SYMPHONIES OF SICKNESS

Neoliberalism is a discourse. This declaration is not to suggest that neoliberalism is without substantive grounded effects. Like all discourses, neoliberalism does not simply float above the Earth as a disconnected theory that remains detached from everyday life. Its policies affect our relationships to each other, its programmes shape our behaviours, and its projects implicate themselves in our lived experiences. There is an irrefutable materiality to neoliberalism, whereby its body is animated by the ways in which its ideas circulate through the arteries of our social world. As the latest incarnation of capitalism, neoliberalism is an idea that is made flesh through the very power that we assign it through our discursive participation in its routines and rituals, and importantly, through the performances we enact. Of course the discourse of neoliberalism had a particular conceptual birth, whereby the idea was first formulated as a supposed salve for all our world's economic woes. It was in Paris at the 'Colloque Walter Lippmann' of 1938 that participants first coined the term 'neoliberalism', which they used to identify their new philosophy of liberalism insofar as it placed extra emphasis on individual economic freedom (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009). Since that initial spark of life we have all played a role in the enactment, exchange and entrenchment of this powerful idea. But not all ideas are worthwhile. In this book, I set out to argue that neoliberalism is not just a discourse, but a discourse that should ultimately be discarded. Neoliberalism is worthless. Neoliberalism is cruel. Neoliberalism is sick. It is a discourse that makes us feel hollow and meaningless, it instills our social behaviours with malice and spite, and it is unquestionably making us all ill. The disease of neoliberalism comes through the ruination of our environment (Castree 2010; Heynen, McCarthy, Prudham and Robbins 2007), the dismantling of public health services (Schrecker and Bambra 2015; Sparke 2016), and the multiple ways in which it corrupts our thinking by pitting us against each other in an all-against-all bloodbath of meritocracy (Roberts and Mahtani 2010; Springer 2015).

So even as I set out to argue that neoliberalism is a discourse, I want to reinforce a perspective that acknowledges the undeniable corporeality of

this extremely unhealthy idea, while also probing its impacts on human bodies (Bruff 2013). To this end, this book is a descanting of the discourse of neoliberalism in the dual sense of providing a sustained commentary on its power while at the same time offering a renouncing counterpoint to its insalubrity. Ivan Illich (quoted in Viola 2009: 23) once argued that,

> Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step. . . . If you want to change a society, then you have to tell an alternative story.

This quote alerts us to the idea that societal change is within our grasp, should we find the courage to change the discourse. We need to establish new regimes of truth beyond the suffocating strictures of neoliberalism. Such a task sounds easy enough, but a great deal of the power that neoliberalism has accumulated over the decades of its roll out across the globe has been cultivated through the persistent idea that we have no choice in the matter (Fisher 2009). As with all self-fulfilling prophecies, the more we convince ourselves of the invincibility of neoliberalism, the more its immortality becomes assured precisely because that becomes our political will. We call neoliberalism into being, and it is therefore ultimately all of us who are empowered to change it.

The discourse of neoliberalism is one that has, thus far, been very successful in convincing us that we should play its zero-sum game. If we don't do so, we will assuredly feel the boot of our compatriots dig into our backs as they clamour for a higher position in the hierarchy. Only by climbing on their shoulders first and exploiting any collective good by claiming whatever portion of the commons we can for ourselves can we survive. Or so we are told. Neoliberalism is the tale of Social Darwinism taken to its absurd culmination (Kulić 2004; Leyva 2009). It fosters an individual ethic that allows selfishness to reap its own rewards. And so we spiral downwards into a seemingly bottomless pit of narcissism, ego and self-absorption. For those who already see this writing on the wall, there is no surprise that neoliberalism is destroying us along with the planet that we inhabit. With its motivations of self above all else how could it result in anything else? Sadly, the booming chorus of neoliberal minstrels ensures that the warning signs remain marginalised, diminishing our potential to turn the page of social transformation by reconvening through a new emphasis on conviviality and community. Yet in spite of the divisive message of relentless competition and endless accumulation, there is an alternative story that we can tell, one that is in fact already happening all about us. Another melody is already being played just beneath the roaring neoliberal refrain. If you listen carefully, in moments

of quiet contemplation you can hear its hum. It sounds like people gathering together for potluck suppers; like the busy, happy work of tending to community gardens; like the welcoming grace of neighbourhood support networks for recent migrants; like the innovation of peer-to-peer file sharing, open-source software and wikis; and increasingly it sounds like the defiance of direct action and civil disobedience. So the message is starting to spread, and since the time of the now infamous 'Battle in Seattle' in 1999 (Smith 2001; Wainwright 2007), we've seen evermore cracks in the neoliberal façade as resistance movements spring up among disaffected and disillusioned groups who have begun organising and assembling against neoliberalism. Each of these examples of antineoliberal action should be heard as anthems of rebellion, and it is precisely the dissonance that they create within the thundering neoliberal dirge of destruction that signals the possibility of meaningful and lasting change. The world is beginning to wake up and smell the carcass of neoliberalism as it begins to rot in the arrogance of its own self-assurance. This book, in examining the anatomy of neoliberalism, is unmistakably an effort to initiate its autopsy. Such a move implies that neoliberalism is dead, and I can already hear the clamour of disagreement against such a mount of execution. Yet that racket *is* the power of neoliberalism. It is exactly this nagging voice of confidence in neoliberal ideas that continues to rattle around in the back of our heads that sustains the discourse and nourishes its strength. We need to flip the script.

REEK OF PUTREFACTION

Like all discourses neoliberalism feeds on its open expression, and so the more we talk about neoliberalism, even if from a critical perspective, the more vigour we bring to the idea. Thus, as much as I want to escape neoliberalism and suggest that this book is another nail in its coffin, the very fact that I am discussing it at all in some ways undermines that desired outcome. Sick though it may be in our assessments, our conversations about neoliberalism are undeniably a key reason for the maintenance of its vitality. Yet part of telling a new powerful tale beyond neoliberalism, one that can once and for all sweep away its myths, includes gathering its bits into a coherent whole and shining a light on its proceedings. So although I suspect that some may see my desire to herald the death of neoliberalism as premature, I nonetheless want to wield a scalpel and make an incision. By placing neoliberalism on the slab and preparing it for necropsy there is of course a danger of letting down our guard. Given the very real capacity for resurrection and the ways in which neoliberalism has become a zombified idea (Fisher 2013; Peck 2010; Quiggin 2012), we must maintain our vigilance. Yet at the same time, a close dissection of its techniques, strategies, rationalities and tech-

nologies allows us to understand what exactly reanimates neoliberalism. Such an autopsy can provide us with a greater appreciation for the fact that the basis of neoliberalism's power is fundamentally something we have collectively breathed life into over the course of its pernicious reign. Yet we should make no mistake. *Neoliberalism is dead*. While for some this is a strange 'non-death' (Crouch 2011), we might more productively consider it stillborn, where right from the outset, neoliberalism was always and already undead. Inasmuch as its theorisation breaks down and is thoroughly contradicted when it encounters the grounded geographies of political economic contexts and the actually existing conditions of social and cultural processes (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Smith 2007; Springer 2011), neoliberalism's very composition makes it a dead-letter idea. The process of decay set in during the very first neoliberal experiment, the supposed 'Miracle in Chile' of 1973 (Winn 2004), as this ostensibly emancipatory agenda immediately became an oppressor under the vile dictatorship of Pinochet. Of course the fact that our present moment of globalised neoliberalism was first set in motion in the South American state through a CIA orchestrated coup could never bode well for a future free of violence, that hasn't stopped the global 'roll out' of neoliberalism's three basic tenets: deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation (Graefe 2005). And so we keep on rotting in the 'Free World', as the legacy of this first of neoliberalism's many failures has stalked us ever since.

Despite the apparent incongruity with the state, neoliberalism has in fact been supported and sustained by the governments that have adopted it (Harvey 2005; Peck 2001). The enduring relationship between capitalism and state ensures that it really couldn't be any other way (Springer 2016), and yet both proponents and adversaries alike continually peddle the myth that the decentralising tendency of neoliberalism is eroding the state. Lumbering onward by feeding on such willful naivety, this too implies the power of neoliberalism, facilitating the accumulation by dispossession that elites engage as they make use of the state to line their own pockets. While the 'roll back' of certain functions most definitely occurs, so too does the 'roll out' of a new administrative apparatus (Peck and Tickell 2002), where the state becomes a key instrument in extracting a pound of flesh from the poor. So what exactly is neoliberalism then? At a very general level of abstraction we can suggest that by making reference to something called 'neoliberalism' we are usually denoting the arrival of a new set of social, political and economic arrangements in society that place their collective emphasis on market relations and individual responsibility, which reassigns the role of the state (Springer, Birch and MacLeavy 2016). Many scholars seem to agree that neoliberalism can be broadly understood as the extension of competitive markets into all areas of human activity (see Birch and Mykhnenko 2010; Bourdieu 1998; Cerny 2008; Davies 2014; Dean 2012; Mirowski 2013; Mudge 2008). Key to this process of re-creating society along market lines is the ongoing attempt to

instill a series of social practices and values in subjects (Lemke 2001; MacLeavy 2008; Ong 2007). This process highlights the role of discourse, but again, it is not a detached and immaterial unfolding that is at play here, as there are lasting effects to this transformation of society, owing to the embeddedness of these ideas within the practices of governance at the local level. The implication, as a consequence of the power of this discourse and its presentation as monolithic, is that we are left with an impression that neoliberalism is everywhere (Peck and Tickell 2002). Yet the supposed pervasive uniformity of neoliberalism is illusory, and it is crucial that we attune our analyses to the differing resonance of neoliberal ideas within a diverse range of policy implementations, state projects and sociocultural imaginaries. Cutting against the predominant view of neoliberalism as a pure and static end-state, geographers in particular have sought to explain neoliberalism as a dynamic and unfolding process (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010; Ward and England 2007). The concept of 'neoliberalisation' is consequently seen as being more appropriate to a geographically informed theorisation insofar as it recognises and accounts for the hybridised forms of neoliberalism as it travels around the world and is taken up in different contexts. By rejecting notions of purity and insisting that there is no paradigmatic version of neoliberalism, but rather a series of geopolitically distinct mutations (Peck 2004), we are better positioned to find cracks in the seemingly all powerful façade of this discourse. But there is also room for caution, as a mongrelised reading of neoliberalism renews the difficulty of achieving consensus on a conceptual definition of what 'neoliberalism' actually means, thus reducing our clarity on what we are actually struggling against.

Notwithstanding these problems, by unpacking neoliberalism's tools of the trade through a forensic dissection of their inner workings we come to appreciate more thoroughly precisely what is at stake. By getting to know the enemy – variegated though it may be – through explaining its patterns, discrepancies, habits and inconsistencies, we ultimately better position ourselves to appreciate the new melodies that we might sing. The desire for something different, something new, doesn't have to be abandoned like the buried dreams of the lives we each might have lived if only small circumstances in our fortune had been slightly different. This appeal to transformation, this sense of yearning for change can instead form the sanguine article of our emancipation, the embodiment of our collective agency against the doctrinal expletives of neoliberal ideology. In signaling our insistence that there is no love lost for its decaying ideas, fetid as they are in the face of our collective well-being, we close the book on the neoliberal story and order the issuance of a death certificate for neoliberalism. Only by insisting on the death of neoliberalism can we open a window to the breeze of possibility, thus dispelling the enchantment of neoliberalism's hypnotic narrative and dispersing the reek of putrefaction it has left in the room. The burden of this mortal coil must

be abandoned if we are to have a future at all. The stakes really are that high. As the planet heats up, neoliberalism only quickens the pace of climate disaster through its insatiable appetite for the extraction of resources (Parr 2014). A fervent lust for accumulation has ensured our atomisation, where the accessibility of 'more' sees us only wanting more still. We occupy our days not with the joy of community, but with the proxy of consumerism as we attempt to fill the void and lingering feeling of emptiness that gnaws away at our sense of worth (Miller 2007). Material greed replaces a sense of belonging as anomie takes hold, and our only connection and responsibility to each other is that we all view the other as a competitor, one who stands in the way of our ravenous hunger to get ahead. Today's treasure is tomorrow's garbage, and we just keep piling it higher and higher, oblivious to the stench. So we need to give up the ghost that suggests that neoliberalism is ever a tenable idea. To fantasise about the possibility of a heterodox shift in the political economic circumstances of the current moment can no longer be dismissed as the misspent pastime of daydreaming idealists and idealist daydreamers. Our idyll is not idle. As precarious as this train of thought may be, it is a canvas to paint, a light that shines on our future.

SURGICAL STEEL

While the term 'anatomy' is somewhat problematic insofar as employing a biological metaphor could be interpreted as contributing to the normalisation of economic ideas, this is not at all my purpose. Neoliberalism is not natural, nor is it inevitable. Instead, I want to signal the discursive constructedness of neoliberalism so that it can be productively dissected. Its corpus is something that we have collectively made through the kinds of unhealthy social, political and economic connections we have embraced. Accordingly, so too then is neoliberalism something that we can ultimately unmake. While there is no specific panacea that can be prescribed in any attempt to cure this ailment, there is nonetheless reason for hope. In part, it is our pessimism itself, and the nihilistic insistence of an assumed perpetual neoliberal co-optation of our lived experiences that continues to stimulate the power of this idea. We've all been swallowing the bitter pill of 'there is no alternative' for far too long. It is an idea that pokes and prods at our subconscious even as we actively refuse it. The hallucinatory effects of neoliberalism stream through the veins of our societies, but this drug-induced illness need not be considered permanent. While our societies may currently be cycling through the stages of addiction, we are not stuck with anything of our own making and any suggestion otherwise is meant to be disabling. Neoliberalism already stinks of decay, and recovery means that we can't just leave it alone. Carving out skilful words that shear neoliberalism's brittle bones, a dis-

course analysis becomes the surgical steel that is required to perform the autopsy in examining the anatomy of this powerful idea. By speaking to an anatomy then, I want to hint at the mortality of neoliberalism and the potential of condemning its corpse to the mortuary of bad ideas so as to prepare it for permanent burial. While the death of this discourse is not assured, and as we shall see, neoliberalism has been the focus of particular forms of reanimation, there is nonetheless still a possibility of moving beyond neoliberalism towards more emancipatory forms of organising our relations to each other. In the chapters that follow this introduction I set out to explore the internal workings of capitalism's most infamous contemporary offspring by dissecting the diverse interpretations of neoliberalism that have been advanced in academia and beyond. Using a critical geographical approach to pierce the heart of neoliberal theory, I advance a discursive understanding wherein political economic approaches to neoliberalism are sutured together with poststructuralist interpretations in an attempt to overcome the ongoing ideological impasse that prevents the articulation of a more vibrant solidarity on the political left.

I begin my examination with 'Expansions, Variegations and Formations', a chapter that traces the intellectual history of neoliberalism and its expansions across various institutional frameworks and geographical settings. I review the primary contributions that geographers in particular have made to the literature, specifically their recognition for neoliberalism's variegations within existing political economic matrixes and institutional frameworks. Contra the prevailing view of neoliberalism as a pure and static end-state, geographical inquiry illuminates neoliberalism as a dynamic and unfolding process. The concept of 'neoliberalisation' is explicitly argued to be a more useful theorisation inasmuch as it is able to appropriately recognise the extent and degree of neoliberalism's hybridised and mutated forms as it has been taken up in different geographical contexts. I also introduce some of the most salient ways that neoliberalism has been theorised, critiqued and understood among critical scholars, highlighting interpretations of neoliberalism as a hegemonic ideology, as a policy-based approach to state reform and as a particular logic of governmentality arguing that it is important to work beyond methodological, epistemological and ontological divides in the larger interest of social justice. This argument is taken up more fully in the chapter that follows.

With 'Between Hegemony and Governmentality' I attempt to provide a solution to the theoretical impasse detailed in chapter 1. Here I explicitly explore how contemporary theorisations of neoliberalism are framed by a false dichotomy between, on the one hand, studies influenced by Michel Foucault in emphasising neoliberalism as a form of governmentality, and on the other hand, inquiries influenced by Karl Marx in foregrounding neoliberalism as a hegemonic ideology. My purpose here is to

shine some light on this ostensibly dichotomous division in an effort to open up new debates and recast existing ones in such a way that might lead to more flexible understandings of neoliberalism as a discourse. A discourse approach moves theorisations forward by recognising neoliberalism is neither a 'top-down' nor 'bottom-up' phenomena, but rather a circuitous process of ongoing sociospatial change. The outcome of such an approach is to recognise that our various understandings of neoliberalism can actually be productively brought together in ways that may facilitate new forms of solidarity against neoliberalism. While I don't suggest that all of the difficulties of these various approaches are sorted out, I nonetheless want to advocate for a political imagination that is at least open to thinking through their connections as a strategic move in countering the ongoing power of neoliberalism.

In chapter 3, 'Anxious Geopolitics', I seek to demonstrate how the rise of neoliberalism can be productively understood as a particular form of anxiety that first began as a response to the atrocities of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and the Soviet Union. In particular I argue that it was a belief that government intervention had jeopardised personal freedoms and was thus responsible for the carnage that led to the rise of neoliberal ideas. Right from its birth neoliberalism could accordingly be read as a discursive enterprise. By taking such a critical geopolitical reading of neoliberalism as our starting point, my contention is that we are better equipped to challenge the assumed inevitability and all-encompassing 'bulldozer effect' that pervades in popular media accounts of free market capitalism and its colloquial understanding as 'globalisation'. I then turn my attention to the continuing role of the state and address how discourse functions to secure consent for neoliberalism's particular political rationality. I hope to remind readers that although the role of the state has become subtler under neoliberalism through a reconfiguration of the citizen-subject via processes of governmentality, this does not mean that it has entirely exited the political scene. To the contrary, I argue that the transformed role of the state under neoliberalisation is susceptible to expressions of authoritarianism and violence (Bruff 2014; Giroux 2015), which brings the state back into plain view as it comes into conflict with those individuals who have been marginalised by neoliberalism's belligerent regulatory reforms and discriminatory policy initiatives.

Chapter 4, 'Delusion, Disillusion and Denial', addresses recent debates concerning the utility or futility of neoliberalism as an actually existing concept, where some have suggested neoliberalism is little more than a necessary illusion. I remind readers that by including an understanding of neoliberalisation as part of a critical theoretical edifice we advance a potentially empowering position that allows for the accumulation of a greater sense of solidarity. While scholars have raised important epistemic challenges, a close reading of the geographical literature reveals that conceptualising neoliberalism as inevitable or as a paradigmat-

ic construct are actually untenable, where protean notions of hybridity and articulation with existing political economic circumstances have greater traction. A discursive understanding of neoliberalism further reveals it as an assemblage, and thus to hold neoliberalism to a sense of purity is little more than a straw person argument. Despite the positive desire to allow space for alternatives, the denial of neoliberalism is not a viable politics of displacement (Springer 2014). Neoliberalism may be dead, but it is a sort of living dead (Harman 2009; Smith 2008). Thus by employing neoliberalism as a critical political slogan we embrace the explanatory power that neoliberalism holds in relating similar constellations of experiences across space as a potential basis for emancipation. Doing so is important inasmuch as it can assist in staving off the prospect of an immanently violent future under neoliberal rule. In contrast, by failing to acknowledge the material effects of neoliberalisation we delude ourselves by obfuscating the reality of the festering poverty, rising inequality and ongoing geographies of violence that have been attendant to intensifying neoliberalisation as something unknowable and 'out there'. Such a view is critiqued on the basis that it is ultimately defeatist and fails to give proper credit to some of the powerful blows that have already been levelled at neoliberalism in the form of mass protests.

In chapter 5, 'Of Violence and Victims', I attempt to bring neoliberalism into direct conversation with the violence it unleashes and the ways in which it attempts to disassociate itself from the places where the violence of neoliberalism becomes manifest. Through imaginative geographies that erase the interconnectedness of the places where violence occurs, the notion that violence is 'irrational' marks particular cultures as 'other' (Demmers and Mehendale 2010; Scharff 2011). Neoliberalism exploits such imaginative geographies in constructing itself as the sole providence of nonviolence and the lone bearer of reason. Proceeding as a 'civilising' project, neoliberalism positions the market as salvationary to putatively 'irrational' and 'violent' peoples. This theology of neoliberalism produces a discourse that binds violence in place and blames the victims for the disastrous effects that neoliberalisation visits upon them. But while violence sits in places in terms of the way in which we perceive its manifestation as a localised and embodied experience, this very idea is challenged when place is reconsidered as a relational assemblage. What this retheorisation productively does then is open up the supposed fixity, separation and immutability of place to instead recognise it as always coconstituted by, mediated through and integrated within the wider experiences of space. Such a radical rethinking of place fundamentally transforms the way we understand violence and consequently neoliberalism. No longer confined to its material expression as an isolated and localised event, violence can more appropriately be understood as an unfolding process, derived from the broader geographical phenomena

and temporal patterns of a social-economic world that has most evidently been shaped by a proliferation of neoliberal ideas.

In the final chapter before the conclusion I turn my attention to the undead nature of neoliberalism, identifying the current moment as a 'Zombie Apocalypse!' The chapter explores how, with the recent developments of both the Occupy Movement and the Arab Springs, public criticisms of neoliberalism have climaxed as disaffected people of all shades and stripes wade through the debris of a global financial crisis that began in late 2008 and continues to resonate into the present moment. The mobilisation of protesters in cities throughout the world was preceded by much speculation in the media and blogosphere over the past few years, where commentators have been quick to suggest that the end of neoliberalism is upon us. The validity of a 'postneoliberal' discourse, however, remains tenuous (Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2010), as its advocates continue to treat neoliberalism as a monolithic, static and undifferentiated end-state. Despite the desire to move beyond neoliberal strictures, there is an undeniable continuity to the discursive formation of neoliberalism that must be appreciated if we ever hope to leave this unforgiving version of capitalism truly in the past. While hopeful for the new possibilities of a better tomorrow, this chapter reminds readers that neoliberalism still haunts the present with a relentless zombie-like character. Resisting the living dead that neoliberalism has become requires an even greater sense of awareness in warding off the evermore erratic and unpredictable nature of this powerful idea. Yet in moving us out of our current enslavement to neoliberalism to a point where we can recognise its obliteration we need to start actively constructing alternatives, which is the focus that I bring to the conclusion.

SWANSONG

Reading neoliberalism as a discourse better equips us to understand the power of this motley economic formation as an expansive process of social-spatial transformation that is intimately bound up with the production of poverty, inequality and violence across the globe (Duggan 2012). In examining how imaginative geographies are employed to discursively bind neoliberalism's attendant violence to particular places and thereby blame its victims, the vivisection of neoliberalism that is offered here reveals the concealment of an inherently bloodthirsty character to neoliberalism. Few scholars of neoliberalism have explicitly linked their critiques to power and violence (see Bumiller 2009; Coşar and Yücesan-Özdemir 2012; Hristov 2014; Nixon 2011; Springer 2015), and even fewer has sought to bring the insights of political economy perspectives into conversation with poststructuralist understandings (Cameron and Palan 2004; Kiersey 2009; Peters 2001; Peterson 2006). These are both curious

gaps in the literature and ones that this book seeks to help fill, as each seems vitally important to advancing a critical volley against the taken for granted quality of neoliberalism in our world today. Why should we be worried about neoliberalism and how can we deem it unfit for human consumption if we are not able to fully appreciate its deleterious effects? Furthermore, how can we fully appreciate the intricacies and power of neoliberalism without attending to and seeking to potentially reconcile the various critical theorisations of how it actually operates? The aim of this book then is to produce a critical political economy-meets-poststructuralist perspective on the relationship between neoliberalism and power through an interpretation of neoliberalism as a discourse. By advancing a geographical approach to understanding both the discursive formations and material consequences of neoliberalism, I hope to expose how processes of neoliberalisation are shot through with violence. A discursive approach illuminates the vital and ongoing power of neoliberalism, where my intention is to open up a critical space for thinking through how life beyond neoliberalism might be achieved. Before we can destroy something and banish it to the annals of history, we must first seek to comprehensively understand it. By detailing the anatomy of neoliberalism's power we take a crucial step in the direction of terminating its influence.

Neoliberalism is not something we can simply wish away. It has an enduring tendency to co-opt and capture a broad range of political projects, thus demanding a sustained sense of vigilance lest it sink its hooks into our efforts to undo it. We need the surgical precision of critical interrogation to dissect the anatomy of neoliberalism, and the steely eyed vision to contend with what we actually find inside the pestilent body of neoliberal theory and practice. Yet neoliberalism isn't just a single illness, and so there isn't a specific failsafe cure. Given the geographically diffuse and variegated forms that neoliberal ideas have taken on (England and Ward 2007; Macartney 2010), part of neoliberalism's power comes from recognising that it is actually a symphony of sickness, a discordant cacophony of insalubrious ideas that mutate and contort according to the narratives we weave in the contexts that we live. As we start to tell an alternative story and society begins to shift in new directions, change in heterodox ways and transform towards tomorrow, we simultaneously begin to write the obituary for neoliberalism. While neoliberalism may seem like a monolithic, immortal or unstoppable force, this swarming vulgar mass of infected virulence is an idea that is only empowered by our participation. Like all forms of power, neoliberalism can't survive without capitulation and consent (Chomsky 1999; Ong 2006). In removing those conditions we engage a prefigurative politics that hums to the tune of a new, more harmonious melody. Our direct action, and only our action, can remove the sickness, repairing our communities and ultimately healing ourselves in the process. Our individual and collective willing-

ness to struggle, to refuse, to push back, to resist, to oppose, to contest, to thwart, to disobey, to frustrate, to impede, to abstain, to defy and to *revolt* at the nauseating filth that neoliberalism represents is the vital heart work that signals its swansong. Tomorrow belongs to nobody, we are not a generation hexed, lost in the dark satanic mills of an eternal neoliberalism. Our collective repulsion for neoliberalism is a narrative that pumps our creative energies and desire for change through the arteries of society. As the stories of our success begin to fill the capillaries of the body politic, we animate a new anatomy of power, taking the first steps towards lasting social, political and economic change.

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ONE

Expansions, Variegations and Formations

Within human geography, the word 'neoliberalism' – a term that generally refers to a new political, economic and social arrangement emphasising market relations, minimal state responsibility or intervention and individual responsibility – seems to be on the tip of virtually everyone's tongue. From concerns centring on how neoliberalism shapes processes of policy revision and state reform to growing interest in neoliberalism's intersections with subject formation, the idea of 'neoliberalism' has captured the imagination of a discipline. Outside of geography, the social science and activist literatures have likewise seen neoliberalism replace earlier labels that referred to specific politicians or political projects (Larner 2009). Among activists, it was the Zapatistas' series of 'encounters' with neoliberalism in Chiapas, Mexico, beginning with the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994 that first placed the term in global circulation. 'Neoliberalism' has since become a means of identifying a seemingly ubiquitous set of market-oriented policies as being largely responsible for a wide range of social, political, ecological and economic problems.

This explosion of interest emerged in ways that were unforeseeable only a decade ago. Economic geographers were engaged in debates over globalisation, economic disparity, structural adjustment, growth poles and privatisation, while social geographers concerned themselves with homelessness, racism, gender, sexuality and subjectivities. However, none of these themes were linked together under the ostensibly all-encompassing banner of 'neoliberalism' as appears to be the case in contemporary human geography. The deployment of neoliberalism among activists and the academy is thus a very recent phenomenon. As Peck, Theodore and Brenner (2009) have noted, 'of the 2500 English-language arti-

cles in the social sciences that cite "neoliberalism" as a keyword, 86% were published after 1998'. So while, as we shall see, neoliberalism is hardly new, its recent expansion into a field of academic inquiry has been nothing short of meteoric. The domains in which analyses of neoliberalism are deployed have also expanded, proliferating across multiple contexts as academics are increasingly keen to investigate its relational connections and disruptions across space, and also to highlight its multiscalar (dis)continuities in examining how macrolevel discussions of global economic change connect with microlevel debates on subjectivities. Geographers are now examining the relationships between neoliberalism and a vast array of conceptual categories, including cities (Hackworth 2007; Leitner, Peck and Sheppard 2007), gender (Brown 2004; Oza 2006), citizenship (Ong 2006; Sparke 2006a), sexualities (Oswin 2007; Richardson 2005), labour (Aguiar and Herod 2006; Peck 2002), development (Hart 2002; Power 2003), migration (Lawson 1999; Mitchell 2004), nature (Bakker 2005; McCarthy and Prudham 2004), race (Haylett 2001; Roberts and Mahtani 2010), homelessness (Klodawsky 2009; May, Cloke and Johnsen 2005) and violence (Springer 2009; 2011; 2016) to name but a few.

I begin this chapter with an analysis of neoliberalism's expansions, both as an intellectual idea and in terms of its diffusion across various institutional frameworks and geographical settings. I trace the origins of the concept from its beginnings as a marginalised ideal seeking to remake laissez-faire economics in the face of Keynesian dominance through to its rise to prominence as the primary economic doctrine of our age. In the following section, I attend to the geographies of neoliberalism more thoroughly through an engagement with the variegations that this economic orthodoxy has encompassed in its unfolding. Here, I look to the contributions geographers have made to the literature in terms of recognising how neoliberalism is never a pure or finished project, but instead represents a dynamic, ongoing process. Existing political economic arrangements and institutional frameworks necessarily have implications for the uptake and unfolding of neoliberalism in various spatial settings, and, as such, to speak of neoliberalism in the sense of a singular idea is an abstraction. In line with the most recent thinking among geographers, I encourage readers to engage the concept of 'neoliberalisation' as more appropriate to geographical theorisations insofar that it recognises neoliberalism's hybridised and mutated forms as it travels around our world. In the third section I move on to consider neoliberalism's formations around three principal theorisations that have emerged in the literature: (1) neoliberalism-as-ideological hegemonic project; (2) neoliberalism-as-policy; and (3) neoliberalism-as-governmentality. Here I provide an overview of each interpretation and point to some of the emerging contributions among geographers that hint at an overlap between neoliberalism's theoretical formations, an intellectual task that seems imperative to the struggle for social justice. Finally, in the conclusion, I summar-

ise the key ideas presented in this chapter and suggest that while they open up important and necessary critiques of neoliberalism, vigilance to the larger imperatives of capitalism is still required to enable a possible future that refuses this particular transitory moment as a preordained 'end of history' (Fukuyama 1992).

EXPANSIONS: THE RISE OF NEOLIBERALISM

It was only over the course of a number of false starts and setbacks that neoliberalism as a fringe utopian idea (Peck 2008) was able to emerge as an orthodox doctrine that has coagulated as a divergent yet related series of neoliberalisations (Hart 2008; Ward and England 2007). The ideas and policies that are now standard practice in the contemporary neoliberal toolkit surely seemed incomprehensible sixty years ago as the dust settled in the aftermath of World War II. At that time the Global North was enamored with Keynesian economics, while the ideologies of the political right, owing to the Nazis, became completely anathema to the spirit of the time. This makes the contemporary dominance of neoliberalism all the more surprising. So what happened in the intervening years to allow neoliberalism to become the contemporary 'planetary vulgate'? (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001). Scholars like Duménil and Lévy (2004), George (1999) and Harvey (2005) have all sketched the unfolding of neoliberalism, while Peck (2008) has provided a detailed analysis of the 'prehistories' of 'protoneoliberalism'. The common theme among all of these accounts is an acceptance of a historical lineage to the development of neoliberalism, that it came from somewhere (thus implying a geography of neoliberalism), and that its trajectories were largely purposeful.

The roots of neoliberalism can be traced back to 'multiple beginnings, in a series of situated, sympathetic critiques of nineteenth-century laissez-faire' (Peck 2008: 3). A key starting point would be to look to the 'Colloque Walter Lippmann' of 1938, when a group of twenty-six prominent liberal thinkers, including Friedrich Hayek, Michael Polanyi, Louis Rougier, Wilhelm Röpke and Alexander Rüstow met in Paris to discuss Lippmann's (1937/2005) book, *The Good Society*, with the aim of reinvigorating classical liberalism and its emphasis on individual economic freedoms. Participants discussed names for the new philosophy of liberalism they developed, including 'positive liberalism', but eventually agreed on 'neoliberalism', giving the term both a birthday and an address (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009). The publication of Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* in 1944 was one of the first products of this meeting, establishing Hayek as the principal intellectual architect of the 'neoliberal counterrevolution', as the backlash against Keynesianism has subsequently become known. Hayek had a profound influence over neoliberalism's various apostles, including the Chicago School of Economics' most (in)famous intellectual, Mil-

ton Friedman, and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Margaret Thatcher.

An initial explanation for the contemporary 'triumph' of neoliberalism is that the original group of neoliberals bought and paid for their own regressive 'Great Transformation'. They intuitively understood that their ideas could, with time and relentless cultivation, have very material consequences (George 1999). Starting with the seeds planted in 1938, the guiding principles of neoliberal organising, networking and institutionalisation began to take shape. The 'Colloque Walter Lippmann' recognised that the political right lacked capable experts to proselytise their ideas, so they took it upon themselves to (re)build antisocialist science in order to develop an antisocialist filter in the knowledge-disseminating institutions of society. This objective was given life when many of the original Paris participants reconvened in Switzerland for the founding of the Mont Pèlerin Society in 1947, the first of many neoliberal think tanks. From here, the group established a programme through which they would endeavour to construct an international network of institutes, foundations, research centres and journals to promote neoliberal knowledge (Plehwe and Walpen 2006). The success of this campaign was not simply its growing virility among intellectuals, but rather its achievements hinged on the geographic dispersion of neoliberal discourse across multiple spaces of institutional engagement, including academia, business, politics and media. Accordingly, neoliberal ideas became well positioned to penetrate the everyday spaces of people's lives.

All this neoliberal networking remained in a state of virtual hibernation vis-à-vis public policymaking until the 1970s, when a financial crisis hit and the door to neoliberal reform was blown open. Between 1973 and 1979 world oil prices rose dramatically, where the impact on the 'First World' was severe economic recession, the 'Second World' went into an economic tailspin that eventually led to its disappearance, and the 'Third World' fell into a 'debt crisis', giving rise to a condition of aid dependency that continues to this day. These disruptions marked the beginning of an economic paradigm shift away from Keynesianism and towards neoliberalism. Global North politicians, governments and citizens alike became increasingly disillusioned with the record of state involvement in social and economic life, leading to a growing acceptance of neoliberalism's primary proclamation: the most efficient economic regulator is to 'leave things to the market'. Among neoliberalism's defining, vanguard projects were Thatcherism in the United Kingdom and Reaganomics in the United States. Following this, more moderate forms of neoliberalism were 'rolled out' in traditionally social-democratic states such as Canada, New Zealand and Germany (Peck and Tickell 2002). But it was Chile's trauma that provided the model for what Klein (2007) refers to as the 'shock doctrine', where collective crises or disasters, whether naturally occurring or manufactured, are used to push through neoliberal policies

at precisely the moment when societies are too disoriented to mount meaningful contestation. Pinochet's Chile is widely understood as the first state-level neoliberal experiment, when in 1973 on the 'other 9/11', the American government became embroiled in a coup that saw a despotic hand replace the country's elected socialist government (Challies and Murray 2008).

Following the Chilean experiment, 'shock' tactics became the principle means of delivery in neoliberalism's selective exportation from the Global North to the Global South. The growing debt crisis opened a window of opportunity for neoliberalism as neocolonial relationships of aid dependency were fostered though the auspices of US-influenced multilateral agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Loan dispersals and subsequent reschedulings hinged on conditionalities that subjected recipient countries to structural adjustment programmes, which reorganised their economies along neoliberal lines. Neoliberal economics were packaged, marketed and sold to the Global South as a series of nostrums that once implemented through the freeing of market forces, would supposedly lead to a prosperous future, where all of the world's peoples would come to live in a unified, harmonious 'global village'. Although neoliberalism's utopian promise was an empty one from its outset, powerful elites in various countries and from all political stripes were only too happy to oblige, as neoliberalism often opened up opportunities for well-connected government officials to informally control market and material rewards, thus allowing them to easily line their own pockets (Springer 2009).

A remarkable array of regulatory reforms came with each successive wave of neoliberalism's dispersal. Beyond seeking to deregulate markets, advance 'free' trade and promote unobstructed capital mobility, neoliberalism typically includes the following finer points: it seeks to impede all forms of public expenditure and collective initiative through the imposition of user fees and the privatisation of commonly held assets; to position individualism, competitiveness and economic self-sufficiency as incontestable virtues; to decrease or rescind all forms of social protections, welfare and transfer programmes while promoting minimalist taxation and negligible business regulation; to control inflation even at the expense of full employment; and to actively push marginalised peoples into a flexible labour market regime of low-wage employment, where labour relations are unencumbered by unionisation and collective bargaining (Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002).

Yet, for all the ideological purity of free market rhetoric, and for all the seemingly pragmatic logic of neoclassical economics, 'the practice of neoliberal statecraft is inescapably, and profoundly, marked by compromise, calculation, and contradiction. There is no blueprint. There is not even a map' (Peck 2010). Although the underlying assumptions of neoliberalism and its naturalisation of market relations remain largely constant, neolib-

eralism in its 'actually existing' circumstances (Brenner and Theodore 2002) has nonetheless varied greatly in terms of its dosages among regions, states and cities, where and when it has been adopted. Far from a fait accompli, neoliberalism's ongoing implementation in various sites has been marked by a considerable amount of struggle, contradiction and compromise, which suggests that the meaning of neoliberalism as a paradigmatic construct must necessarily be called into question. It is to the variegations of neoliberalism then that I want to now turn our attention, precisely because the widespread use of neoliberalism as both an analytical construct and as an oppositional slogan has been accompanied by so much imprecision, confusion and controversy that, in effect, neoliberalism has become 'rascal concept' (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010a; Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2009).

VARIEGATIONS: FROM NEOLIBERALISM TO NEOLIBERALISATION

As neoliberalism expanded as a multifaceted theoretical abstraction among scholars, definitional consensus about what might actually be meant by the term has unsurprisingly waned. Neoliberalism has been criticised as suffering from promiscuity (involved with too many theoretical perspectives), omnipresence (treated as a universal or global phenomenon) and omnipotence (identified as the cause of a wide variety of social, political and economic changes) (Clarke 2008). Some commentators have been so deeply troubled by the 'larger conversation' that neoliberalism invokes, or so disillusioned by the potential explanatory power of the concept, that there now exists a willingness to proclaim neoliberalism a 'necessary illusion' (Castree 2006) or simply that 'there is no such thing' (Barnett 2005). These misgivings are centred on the contemporary pervasiveness of neoliberalism in academia and a concern that by constituting neoliberalism as a powerful, expansive and self-reproducing logic, we lend it the appearance of monolithic and beyond reproach. There is much to be gained from such critiques, as it is imperative to contest the neoliberalism-as-monolithism argument for failing to recognise space and time as open and always becoming (Springer 2015). Likewise, in focusing exclusively on an extraneously convened neoliberalism, we overlook the local geographies of existing political economic circumstances and institutional frameworks, where variability, internal constitution, societal influences and individual agency all play a role in (re)producing, circulating and facilitating neoliberalism.

To focus analyses exclusively on external forces is to risk producing overgeneralised accounts of a ubiquitous and singular neoliberalism. Such an approach is insufficient in accounting for the profusion of local variegations that presently comprise the neoliberal project. It is imperative to recognise and account for the traction of neoliberalisation on its

travels around the globe, and to attend to how neoliberalism is always necessarily coconstituted with other existing circumstances. Such polychromatic thinking has prompted a growing tendency in the literature to move away from discussions of neoliberalism and towards a new language of 'neoliberalisation', which acknowledges the multiple geographies of neoliberalism through attention to contextual specificity and local experimentation (see Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010b; England and Ward 2007; Purcell 2008; Smith, Stenning and Willis 2008; Springer 2015). As a series of protean processes, individual neoliberalisations are considered to 'materialise' quite differently as mutated and hybrid forms of neoliberalism, depending on and influenced by geographical landscapes, historical contexts, institutional legacies and embodied subjectivities (Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002).

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that intensive focus on internal phenomena to the exclusion of relational connections across space inadequately addresses the necessary features and significant connections of neoliberalism as a global project (Peck and Tickell 2002). This 'larger conversation' of neoliberalism is considered important in relating similar constellations of experiences across various locations as a potential basis for emancipation (see Brand and Wissen 2005; Featherstone 2005; Hart 2008; Routledge 2003; Willis, Smith and Stenning 2008). Retaining the abstraction of a 'global' neoliberalism allows phenomena like poverty and inequality, which are experienced across multiple sites, to find a point of similarity. In contrast, disarticulation of the global scope of neoliberalism paralyses attempts at building and sustaining solidarity beyond the micropolitics of the 'local'. Accordingly, conceptualising neoliberalism requires an appreciation of the elaborate exchanges between local and extralocal forces operating within the global political economy (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Peck 2001).

In holding the global and local together in ongoing reflection, geographers are beginning to recognise that understanding neoliberalism as a multiscalar and geographically divergent concept requires a processual approach in our thinking. Yet such recognition does not necessarily imply rejecting the notion that neoliberalism may proceed as an imposition, particularly if we consider its movement between classes. With regard to neoliberalism's transfer between states, one potentially useful avenue of investigation might be to unpack particular neoliberalisations in terms of their degree of 'extralocal' imposition. This line of inquiry necessitates a geographical approach to appreciate a particular city, state or region's place in the global economic hierarchy, and how much influence the location in question wields in determining global policies. For example, Rankin and Shakya (2007) explore how microfinancing demonstrates that it is possible for 'peripheries' to shape global neoliberal imperatives. Yet unfortunately they do not question how much sustained influence Chittagong, Bangladesh, the birthplace of microfinancing, has in setting glo-

bal agendas in comparison to a place like New York. This uneven geography of political economic influence is a paramount consideration, as it is one of the foremost reasons why neoliberalisation differs geographically, not only between cities, states and regions, but also within them when we examine 'influence' on a more microscale.

Likewise, in cultivating appreciation for how neoliberalism is actually experienced and domesticated in various settings, the question of how much local elites buy into the processes of neoliberalisation for their own benefit is an important question insofar as it allows us to highlight how neoliberalism combines with existing juridicoinstitutional frameworks and political economic arrangements. If reforms such as privatisation and deregulation – broadly understood as neoliberal in character – are accepted as opportunities for enrichment by local elites in conditions that are already authoritarian, the tension of 'imposition' may be minimal among the upper classes as neoliberalism becomes a useful part of the existing order (Springer 2009). Conversely, for the lower classes the tensions will be much more persistent as the benefits of neoliberalisation are not as forthcoming. By examining elite interests vis-à-vis the general population, the geographic particularities and contextual specificities of neoliberalism come to the fore and shed significant light on neoliberalisation as a hybridised 'mobile technology' (Ong 2007). It is these sorts of questions that have allowed geographers to recognise neoliberalism's particularities as a political project, its hybridities as an institutional matrix and its mutations as an ideological construct, where neoliberalisation in one setting is necessarily understood as unfolding quite differently than neoliberalisation in another geographical location.

Recognition for both the global dynamics and local specificities of neoliberal practices is neatly summarised by Ong (2007: 3) who conceptualises 'big N Neoliberalism' as 'a fixed set of attributes with predetermined outcomes', while suggesting that 'small n neoliberalism' operates 'as a logic of governing that mitigates and is selectively taken up in diverse political contexts'. Similarly, Peck and Tickell (2002) encourage us to consider neoliberalism not as an end-state, but as protean and processual, where neoliberalisation can productively be understood as both an 'out there' and 'in here' phenomenon with differing and uneven effects, yet retaining the indication of an overarching 'logic' due to its diffusion across space. Rather than a singular and fully realised policy regime, ideological form or regulatory framework, scholars should be considering 'actually existing neoliberalisms' in the plural, as mutable geohistorical outcomes, embedded within national, regional and local process of market-driven sociospatial transformation (Brenner and Theodore 2002). Through such interpretation, we can see the consequences of inherited institutional frameworks, policy regimes, regulatory practices and ongoing political struggles as continually redefining neoliberalism. So for all this talk of distinctiveness, proteanism and hybridity, one of the major

requirements of taking neoliberalism seriously in a geographical sense, is to not lose sight of the commonalities of neoliberalism across space, and to recognise the relational geographies produced through the material and often violent outcomes of neoliberal practice (Springer 2015). Thus, contra the existing criticisms relating to the supposed 'nonexistence' of neoliberalism, 'recognizing that there is something which ties such practices together such that grouping them as "neoliberal" is a useful strategy for both theoretical and political purposes' (Smith, Stenning and Willis 2008: 2). Neoliberalism is appropriately understood to be as much of a political, social and cultural practice, grounded in local specificity, as it is a globally informed economic rationality. It is through the detailed tracing of these multiscalar articulations, contradictions and travels that geographers have and can continue to productively demonstrate how neoliberalism literally 'takes place'.

FORMATIONS: THEORISING NEOLIBERALISM

The recognition that there is no pure or paradigmatic version of neoliberalism, but rather a series of geopolitically distinct hybrids (Peck 2004) contributes significantly to the difficulty of achieving consensus on a conceptual definition of 'neoliberalism-in-general'. It would seem that the concept of neoliberalism is simply too amorphous to pin down as the contradictions between paradigm and particularities can perhaps never be fully reconciled. This has given rise to some very different, yet also necessarily overlapping, conceptualisations of neoliberalism. Mudge (2008) demonstrates a synthesis of the various perspectives, as she regards neoliberalism as a *sui generis* ideological system born of historical processes of struggle and collaboration in three worlds: intellectual, bureaucratic and political. These three formations of neoliberalism correspond with Larner's (2000) earlier analysis that identifies ideology, policy and governmentality as the three prongs of neoliberalism's theorisation. More recently Ward and England (2008) have extrapolated on Larner's reading by separating the category of 'policy' into 'policy and programme' and 'state form'. For simplicity sake I retain a trilateral approach in outlining how each formation of neoliberalism has been conceived in the literature.

Neoliberalism as Ideological Hegemonic Project: The Intellectual Formation

Having been built upon the return to laissez-faire principles (Peck 2008), the intellectual formation of neoliberalism is distinguished by an Anglo-American-anchored transnationality that arose from a historical gestation within the institutions of welfare capitalism and the postwar conjuncture (Mudge 2008). Based on this sense of geohistorical genesis,

neoliberalism understood as an ideological hegemonic project maintains that elite groups, organised around transnational class-based alliances, have the capacity to project and circulate a coherent programme of interpretations of the world onto others. This is not merely coercive subordination, but also involves a degree of willing consent. Attention is centred not only on the people and ideas behind the conceptual origin of neoliberalism, but equally on those who are at the forefront of its adoption in a range of geographical settings. This view has been popularised among geographers largely though the work of David Harvey (2005).

Harvey's primary contention is that the foremost achievement of neoliberalism has been the redistribution of wealth to elites, rather than the actual generation of new wealth. In other words, neoliberalism represents the continuation of what Marx (1867/1976) regarded as 'primitive accumulation', which Harvey (2003: 145; see also Glassman 2006; Hart 2006) has renamed 'accumulation by dispossession' to signify its ongoing relevance under contemporary capitalism in the form of: the commodification and privatisation of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations; the conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc.) into exclusive property rights; the suppression of rights to the commons; commodification of labour power and the suppression of alternative (indigenous) forms of production and consumption; colonial, neocolonial and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources); monetisation of exchange and taxation, particularly of land; the slave trade (which continues particularly in the sex industry); and usury, the national debt and, most devastating of all, the use of the credit system as a radical means of accumulation by dispossession. Harvey views neoliberalism as a project that is, above all, concerned with the reconstitution of class power where it exists and its creation where currently absent. This view is increasingly held by a number of critical scholars (see Chomsky 1999; Duménil and Lévy 2004; McMichael 2000; Overbeek 2000; Peet 2002; Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer 2006; Sparke 2004). In defending his position, Harvey (2005) points to the persistent rise of social inequality under neoliberalism, which he regards as structural to the entire project.

Neoliberalism-as-Policy: The Bureaucratic Formation

Neoliberalism's bureaucratic formation is expressed in the reorientation of states arising from specific policies and programmes designed to streamline all sectoral capacities (Mudge 2008). In this understanding, neoliberalism is considered as a process of transformation that states purposefully engage in to remain economically competitive within a transnational playing field. It proceeds along both a quantitative axis of destruction and discreditation entailing the 'roll back' of state capacities, and a qualitative axis of construction and consolidation, which sees the 'roll

out' of reconfigured economic management systems, and an invasive social agenda centred on urban order, surveillance and policing (Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002). This family of state reforms is principally concerned with promoting unfettered competition by removing the state from social affairs and the businesses of ownership. The substantive focus is on the transfer of public holdings over to the private sector of corporate interest. This formation of neoliberalism is thus premised on the idea that opening collectively held resources to market mediation engenders greater efficiency. In this sense, the primary aim of neoliberalism-as-policy is to desacralise those institutions – such as education and health care – that had formerly been protected from market competition. The typical insignias under which such policies and programmes are advanced include privatisation, deregulation, liberalisation, depoliticisation and monetarism (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Martinez and Garcia 2000).

Neoliberalism-as-Governmentality: The Political Formation

The political formation of neoliberalism can be understood as a new market-centric 'politics', where struggles over political authority share a particular ideological centre. In other words, neoliberalism's internal dynamics are underpinned by an unquestioned 'commonsense' (Mudge 2008), meaning quite literally, a sense held in common. In this form, neoliberalism's hegemonic rise and current political influence is understood as owing to the significance of the 'rule of experts' and technocratic knowledge-elites (Mitchell 2002), which follows from a Foucauldian contention that knowledge and power are inseparable. Michel Foucault (1980) recognised that power/knowledge is employed through a matrix and must be analysed as something that circulates. Thus, it was at least partially the successful organisation of neoliberal knowledge-elites into a global network of think tanks that aggrandised neoliberalism to orthodoxy, whereby the power of knowledge-elites and the power of elitist knowledge became mutually reinforcing (Scholler and Groh-Samberg 2006). On the elite level, neoliberalism's political formation is revealed through particular notions about the state's responsibilities, notably to unleash market forces wherever possible, as well as via the locus of state authority and its increasing circumscription of political decision-making. Neoliberalism-as-governmentality rests on the entrenchment of what Gill (1995) refers to as 'market civilisation', or the transformative practices through which capitalist expansion became tied to a legitimating neoliberal discourse of progress and development.

Neoliberalism in the sense of governmentality then is an assemblage of rationalities, strategies, technologies and techniques concerning the mentality of rule that facilitate 'governance at a distance' (Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996). Governmentality occurs by delineating a discursive field

in which the exercise of power is 'rationalised' (Lemke 2001), thereby encouraging both institutions and individuals to conform to the norms of the market. Accordingly, neoliberal politics exhibit bias in their orientation towards certain constituencies, such as businesspeople and white-collar professionals, over and even at the expense of others such as trade unions and the homeless. Heterogeneity is discouraged, and individuals are either to be remade in the image of 'neoliberal proper personhood' (Kingfisher 2007), or 'managed' through a trenchant security regime and its revanchist practices of surveillance (Coleman 2004; Monahan 2006), policing (Herbet 2001; Samara 2010), penalisation (Peck 2003; Wacquant 2001), border controls (Gilbert 2007; Sparke 2006a) and a global 'war on terror' (Lafer 2004; Pieterse 2004). Neoliberalism understood here, proceeds through the continuously unfolding relations between peoples and their socially constructed realities as they are (re)assembled, (re)imagined and (re)interpreted to effect forms of knowledge through 'the conduct of conduct' (Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Larner 2003). This understanding implies power as a complex yet very specific form that focuses on knowledge production through the ensemble of institutions, procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics that allow for the decentring of government through the active role of autoregulated, autocorrecting selves (Foucault 1991).

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Each of these formations of neoliberalism does not exist on its own in a pure or complete sense, but instead maintains a degree of liminality, as significant connections with the other interpretations can be seen in their usage in the literature. Recent works by Peck (2004), Larner (2003) and Peet (2007), are demonstrative of an increasing willingness to 'cross the line' and work through the epistemological, ontological and methodological differences between these formations, even if each scholar privileges particular views on neoliberalism. Likewise, important middle ground scholarship is emerging as geographers are beginning to demonstrate focused concern for more hybridised interpretations (see Gilbert 2005; McCarthy 2006; Raco 2005). Less common are truly hybrid approaches that attempt to synthesise these divergent conceptions. Sparke's (2004; 2006b; 2008) series of progress reports along with recent works by England and Ward (2007) and Smith, Stenning and Willis (2008) offer some notably rare exceptions.

Given the importance of both Marxian political economy perspectives and poststructuralist critique in contemporary human geography, this is one potential area of inquiry to which geographers could productively lend their voices in achieving a more holistic grasp of how neoliberal formations might be understood. Reconciling the supposedly diametric positions of a poststructuralist take on governmentality with a Marxian

account of hegemonic ideology is of paramount importance, because it relates to whether we view resistance to neoliberalism as a desire to replace it with more benign forms of capitalism and slightly altered subjectivities, or whether we want to see the entire project of capitalism vanquished from this earth and human subjects liberated from all forms of domination. That is, theoretical harmonisation of neoliberalism's formations may well be central to how social justice is conceived and how it might be practiced in a postneoliberal world. This is not a simple task, but the way forward might just be to examine the continuity between discourse and ideology – as communicated systems of ideas, attitudes and practices that both result from and are instrumental in the construction of the world – and to attend more thoroughly to the overlapping role these conceptualisations have played in producing neoliberal 'commonsense' and hegemony. I attend to this very task in the chapter that follows.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have traced neoliberalism's expansions from its origins as a marginalised theory during the height of Keynesianism, through to its contemporary orthodoxy. I have examined a more rigorous conceptualisation of neoliberalism as 'neoliberalisation', highlighting how theorising neoliberalism geographically through its 'actually existing' entanglements with political economic circumstances compels us to recognise its variegations across space, where any sense of monolithism or singularity is dissolved. I have also illuminated some of the salient ways neoliberalism has been theorised among scholars. Here I have focused on understandings of neoliberalism as a hegemonic ideology, as a policy-based approach to state formation and as a particular logic of governmentality, suggesting that while there are significant differences between these various formations, it may also be important to begin working through methodological, epistemological and ontological divides in the larger interest of social justice. Although we have seen that neoliberalism is not new, its uptake and sheer pervasiveness within the contemporary social sciences is remarkable, especially when we consider its virtual absence from the literature just a decade ago.

While such attention is a necessary intellectual project, this development often leaves me feeling a little uneasy. Has being 'anti-neoliberal' simply replaced the more overt stance of being 'anti-capitalist' among critically inclined scholars? If so, is being 'against neoliberalism' to be taken at face value as a rejection of the 'neo', but nonetheless accepting of other forms of capitalism without fully appreciating Marxist, feminist, anarchist and even poststructuralist critiques that define capitalism, regardless of its incarnation, as a system of exploitation and domination? If

we are to accept a more 'gentle face' of neoliberalism, or even a return to Keynesian-style arrangements, does the underlying logic of capitalism not still give us significant cause for alarm? The answers to these questions continue to unfold alongside the neoliberal project, but they are of critical importance for scholars to reflexively engage. The necessity of such meditation has become even more acute with the recent financial crisis and the legion of commentators who, relying on the ageographical interpretation of neoliberalism as an undifferentiated monolith, are sounding its death knell (Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2009). Neoliberalism is indeed dead inasmuch as it has run out of politically viable ideas, but its dominance, like that of capitalism, remains frightfully animate (Smith 2008). Consequently, ongoing cultivation of a critical decentring of capitalism is needed, perhaps like never before.

Geographers in particular have been at the forefront of demonstrating how and why neoliberalism is not inevitable, preordained or the *sine qua non* of human development and achievement. Geography impels us to recognise a multiplicity of possible futures, where the spell that neoliberalism has cast on the political imaginations of our leaders, our policymakers and ourselves, need not be everlasting. As a discipline, human geography cannot afford to erode its critical potential by becoming too caught up in the semantics of which theoretical approach to neoliberalism constitutes its most salient formation, nor can it afford to have its most critical element, namely the critique of capitalism, weakened by directing attention too far from this central concern. The eye of the discipline, and critical scholarship more generally, must remain focused on the task of carving out a more radical space in which capitalism might be undone. The current moment of global capitalism, variegated, hybridised, protean and processual as it may be under neoliberalism, remains the same heartless brute it has always been. So while neoliberalism as a 'radical theoretical slogan' (Peck 2004: 403) undoubtedly comes with limitations, if we engage it as a reference point in building solidarity and uniting diverse struggles against the disciplining, exploitative and dominating structures of capitalism, we retain the critical potential and radical promise that critical geography provides.

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TWO

Between Hegemony and Governmentality

The rupture that exists in current theorisations of neoliberalism is to at least some degree framed by a false dichotomy between those studies that have been influenced by Michel Foucault in emphasising governmentality, and those studies that foreground ideas of hegemonic ideology, drawing influence from Karl Marx. Yet in a conversation with Foucault, Gérard Raulet once asked, 'But does this . . . mean that, in a certain way, Marx is at work in your own methodology', to which Foucault responded 'Yes, absolutely' (Foucault 1988a: 46). R. James Goldstein's (1991: 14) contention that 'In reply to Marx's famous thesis that philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world when the real point is to change it, Foucault would no doubt have argued that our constant task must be to keep changing our minds' thus seems particularly apt in identifying the false dichotomy that seems to persist. In this chapter I do not presume to work out all the tensions that inevitably arise between poststructuralist and Marxian accounts, yet to be very clear, nor do I seek to. My purpose is much more modest than that. In the spirit of 'changing our minds', I instead seek to shine some new light on a factional issue in the interest of opening up new debates and recasting existing ones in such a way that might lead to more flexible and circuitous understandings of neoliberalism.

Within the broader literature, my approach is signalled by the 'cultural turn' of both international political economy and economic geography. The emphasis on cultural approaches to understanding economies and their geographies, or what Andrew Sayer (2001) has called a 'cultural economy', envisions 'culture' as a bottom-up method of analysis, augmenting the more traditional top-down approach of political economy (Hudson 2006). This shift in focus recognises the meanings that social

practices and relations have for those situated within them, and further that economic agents do not merely submit to the abstract category of 'market'. Rather, their economic world is infused with contestation over what constitutes the market/state, and the rules and conventions according to which actors should operate. Equally, it also presumes a degree of reflexivity among political economists, recognising that their theories are (re)produced in specific space-time contexts as 'situated knowledges' (Haraway 1988). From a feminist perspective, Nagar, Lawson, McDowell and Hanson (2002) have argued that political economic geography must necessarily be extended even further to begin accounting for the gendered spatial dimensions that underpin local-cum-global economic processes, and particularly the analytical erasure of the role of feminised subjects and the informal work they perform. Congruent to this project is the need for future studies to cut across scales, bringing together perspectives from both the Global North and the Global South in highlighting the relationship between particularised and generalised economic processes (Nagar et al. 2002). This is a call answered by Sparke et al. (2005: 359), who attempt to model 'a more socially, culturally, and internationally inclusive critique of neoliberal globalisation for economic geographers' through an evaluation of the degree to which criticisms of neoliberalism articulated at the World Social Forum facilitate the inclusion of excluded subjects, spaces and informal economic spheres into formal economic directives. In short, a culturally informed critical political economy has a major role to play in developing politically enabling understandings of the entanglements of power (Sharp, Routledge, Philo and Paddison 2000) in an increasingly interdependent neoliberal world.

Implicit in these notions of a culturally informed political economy is an appreciation of poststructural critique, which renowned political economist Robert Cox (2002) makes explicit by adopting poststructuralism's classic observation that all power/knowledge is for someone, serving some purpose, and any notion of disinterested objectivity is illusory. Mellissa Wright (2006: 83) neatly summarises poststructuralism's position on objectivity, suggesting 'not only is the idea that we can grasp meaning through language a fiction, albeit a necessary one, but so also is the idea that we can know (conceptualize) or represent original meaning through scientific inquiry'. In other words, as Foucault (1978; 1980) demonstrated through his dismantling of the subject as a self-knowing and autonomous actor, human reality is a protean landscape, produced through innumerable signifying activities, whose origins can never be located through historical, philosophical or 'scientific' inquiry. Poststructuralism thus advances a constructivist position, which deconstructs the truth claims of an objective science by 'showing the radical historical specificity, and so contestability, of every layer of the onion of scientific and technological constructions' (Haraway 1988: 578), which in turn dismantles the possibility of any apparatus that might be used to effectively

talk about the 'real world'. The current influence of neoliberal reason (Peck 2010) offers no exception to the notion that power operates as a field of knowledge serving some purpose, and through such understanding we begin to open a window to how poststructuralism might be able to accommodate the political economy appraisal that neoliberalism is an elite project concerned with the (re)constitution of class power (see Duménil and Lévy 2004; Harvey 2005; Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer 2006).

In recognition of the cultural turn, and informed by both political economy and poststructuralist critiques, in this chapter, I set out to argue in favour of understanding neoliberalism as a particular discourse. I argue that conceptualising neoliberalism as discourse enables a potential merger of political economy and poststructuralist approaches by recognising the importance of both critical perspectives without privileging either. How we understand the translation of global capital across various spaces and cultural contexts, and in particular, how we interpret the fluidity between those who produce and those constrained by neoliberal discourse is a paramount consideration if we are to counter problematic notions of neoliberalism as an unstoppable force. The latest wave of neoliberal 'roll-out' following the financial crisis that began in 2008 makes countering this 'juggernaut view' even more urgent, as what Reijer Hendrikse and James Sidaway (2010) have dubbed 'neoliberalism 3.0' begins seeking out new paths and extensions of power. In tracing the contours of neoliberalism as discourse, I begin with a discussion that outlines the lack of consensus in defining neoliberalism that has contributed to misunderstanding between scholars before moving forward to discuss how various interpretations of neoliberalism might be sutured together.

In short, the primary purpose of this chapter is to contribute to theorisations that might enable more forceful critiques of the power of neoliberalism. A discourse approach moves our theorisations forward through an understanding that neoliberalism is neither built from the 'top-down', as in Marxian understandings of ideological hegemony, nor from the 'bottom-up', as in poststructuralist notions of governmentality. Rather, neoliberalism is instead recognised as a mutable, inconsistent and variegated process that circulates through the discourses it constructs, justifies and defends. There is, no doubt, a terrible danger in a dematerialised poststructuralism, but I set out to argue that poststructuralist thought need not be separated from the material. My purpose is not to replace 'neoliberalism as monolithism' with an immaterial discursivism. Rather, the version of neoliberalism as discourse I present acknowledges the inherently transitory nature of 'the social', but remains 'grounded' by recognising both the Marxian lineage of poststructuralist critique and through an understanding of materialism as an 'archeology of knowledge' (Foucault 1972/2002) that necessarily couples discourse with practice. What is at stake is an understanding of neoliberalism that is duly

aware of both 'structure' and 'agency', thus capturing the discursive production of neoliberalism.

TOWARD A NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSE: IDEOLOGICAL HEGEMONIC PROJECT, POLICY AND PROGRAMME, STATE FORM, AND GOVERNMENTALITY

From initial explorations concerned with the implications for state reform, the expansion of neoliberalism into a field of academic inquiry has been meteoric. Scholars are now examining the relationships between neoliberalism and everything from cities to citizenship, sexuality to subjectivity and development to discourse to name but a few. Concomitant to such theoretical expansion, consensus on what is actually meant by 'neoliberalism' has diminished. Consequently, some commentators have demonstrated considerable anxiety over the potential explanatory power of the concept, labelling neoliberalism a 'necessary illusion' (Castree 2006) or suggesting that 'there is no such thing' (Barnett 2005). Drawing on J. K. Gibson-Graham's (1996) misgivings over the discursive fetishisation of capital, these reservations are anxious about how pervasive neoliberalism has become in academic writing and are equally concerned about the monolithic appearance of neoliberalism owing to its characterisation as expansive, dynamic and self-reproducing. These critiques offer an important call for further reflection, as it is vital to challenge the 'neoliberalism as monolithism' argument for failing to recognise the protean and processual character of space and time (Massey 2005). Similarly, by constituting an external and supposedly omnipresent neoliberalism, we neglect internal constitution, local variability and the role that 'the social' and individual agency play in (re)producing, facilitating and circulating neoliberalism. Such criticisms have triggered an increasing propensity in the literature to replace discussions of neoliberalism with a new language of 'neoliberalisation', which acknowledges multiplicity, complexity, variegation and contextual specificity as the preceding chapter advocates (see also Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010; England and Ward 2007; Heynen and Robbins 2005; Purcell 2008; Springer 2011). As a protean process, neoliberalisation is considered to 'materialise' very differently as a series of hybridised and mutated forms of neoliberalism, contingent upon existing historical contexts, geographical landscapes, institutional legacies and embodied subjectivities (see Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002).

On the other hand, some have called for a moment of pause, suggesting that we should be wary of overly concrete or introspective analyses of the local, as such accounts inadequately attend to the principal attributes and meaningful bonds of neoliberalism as a global project (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Peck and Tickell 2002). The 'larger conversation' that

neoliberalism provokes is regarded as imperative in connecting similar patterns of experiences across space, which may serve as a potential basis for building solidarities (see Brand and Wissen 2005; Escobar 2001; Featherstone 2005; Kohl 2006; Routledge 2003; Springer 2016; Willis, Smith and Stenning 2008). Thus neoliberalism as a concept allows poverty and inequality experienced across multiple sites to find a point of similitude, whereas disarticulation undermines efforts to build and sustain shared aims of resistance beyond the micropolitics of the local. Accordingly, conceptualising neoliberalism requires an appreciation of the elaborate and fluctuating interchange between the local and extra-local forces at work within the global political economy (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Peck 2001). Aihwa Ong (2007: 3) corroborates this notion by conceptualising 'big N Neoliberalism' as 'a fixed set of attributes with predetermined outcomes', while 'small n neoliberalism' operates in practice 'as a logic of governing that mitigates and is selectively taken up in diverse political contexts'. In this light, Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell (2002: 383) propose 'a processual conception of neoliberalisation as both an "out there" and "in here" phenomenon whose effects are necessarily variegated and uneven, but the incidence and diffusion of which may present clues to a pervasive "metalogic". Like globalisation, neoliberalisation should be understood as a process, not an end-state'. Thus, neoliberalism-cum-neoliberalisation can be viewed as a plural set of ideas emanating from both everywhere and nowhere within diffused loci of power (Plehwe and Walpen 2006). The inability to straightforwardly align neoliberalism to particular individuals, organisations or states, and the further recognition that there is no 'pure' or 'paradigmatic' version of neoliberalism, but rather a series of geopolitically distinct and institutionally effected hybrids (Peck 2004), plays a significant role in the difficulty of realising consensus on a conceptual definition of 'neoliberalism in general'. Neoliberalism, it would seem is simply too nebulous to isolate or determine (McCarthy and Prudham 2004).

Nonetheless, following Kevin Ward and Kim England (2007) within the existing literature, we can identify four different understandings of neoliberalism:

1. Neoliberalism as an ideological hegemonic project. This understanding maintains that elite actors and dominant groups organised around transnational class-based alliances have the capacity to project and circulate a coherent programme of interpretations and images of the world onto others. This is not merely subordination to particular coercive impositions, but also involves a degree of willing consent. Attention is focused on the people and ideas behind the conceptual origin of neoliberalism, as well as those who are at the forefront of its adoption in a range of geographical set-

tings (see Cox 2002; Duménil and Lévy 2004; Harvey 2005; Peet 2002; Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer 2006).

2. Neoliberalism as policy and programme. This frame of reference focuses on the transfer of ownership from the state or public holdings to the private sector or corporate interests, which necessarily involves a conceptual reworking of the meaning these categories hold. The understanding itself is premised on the idea that opening collectively held resources to market mediation engenders greater efficiency. The usual motifs under which such policy and programme are advanced include privatisation, deregulation, liberalisation, depoliticisation and monetarism (see Brenner and Theodore 2002; Klepeis and Vance 2003; Martinez and Garcia 2000).
3. Neoliberalism as state form. In this understanding, neoliberalism is considered as a process of transformation that states purposefully engage in to remain economically competitive within a transnational playing field of similarly minded states. This is thought to involve both a quantitative axis of destruction and discreditation whereby state capacities and potentialities are 'rolled back', and a qualitative axis of construction and consolidation, wherein reconfigured institutional mediations, economic management systems and invasive social agendas centred on urban order, surveillance, immigration issues and policing are 'rolled out' (see Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002).
4. Neoliberalism as governmentality. This interpretation of neoliberalism centres on acknowledging a processual character where neoliberalism's articulation with existing circumstances comes through endlessly unfolding failures and successes in the relations between peoples and their socially constructed realities as they are (re)imagined, (re)interpreted and (re)assembled to influence forms of knowledge through 'the conduct of conduct' (Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996; Brown 2003; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Larner 2003; Lemke 2002). This understanding implies power as a complex, yet very specific form centring on knowledge production through the ensemble of rationalities, strategies, technologies and techniques concerning the mentality of rule that allow for the decentring of government through the active role of autoregulated or autocorrecting selves who facilitate 'governance at a distance' (Foucault 1991a). Thus, the internal dynamics of neoliberalism in this understanding are underpinned by an unquestioned 'commonsense', meaning quite literally, a sense held in common.

Given that scholars of neoliberalism typically amalgamate two or more of these views on neoliberalism, my alignment of the studies cited in each understanding of neoliberalism remains open to reader interpre-

tation. Potential misgivings over the associations I have made with regard to particular scholar's views on neoliberalism actually reinforces my argument that each interpretation of neoliberalism does not exist in isolation, but is actually connected to and recursive of the alternative views. Recent contributions demonstrate a growing readiness to sift through the methodological, epistemological and ontological differences between these four definitions (see Larner 2003; Peck 2004; Peet 2007), even if particular views on neoliberalism still come through. Nonetheless, important 'middle ground' inquiries are emerging, where Emily Gilbert (2005), Mike Raco (2005) and James McCarthy (2006) all develop more amalgamated interpretations. Yet truly hybridised approaches that attempt to synthesise or at least reconcile these divergent conceptions in any sustained sense are much less common. A series of progress reports by Matthew Sparke (2004; 2006; 2008) offers a notably rare exception. Concatenating such divergent theorisations is clearly no small task, as it is one that necessarily involves reconciling the Marxian political economy perspective of hegemonic ideology with poststructuralist conceptualisations of governmentality, where policy and programme along with state form approaches fall somewhere in between. For Clive Barnett (2005) the potential of such an exercise is entirely unconvincing as the two intellectual projects imply different models of the nature of explanatory concepts, of causality and determination, of social relations and agency, and different normative understandings of political power. Thus, he argues, 'We should not finesse these differences away by presuming that the two approaches converge around a common real-world referent' (Barnett 2005: 8). Similarly, Noel Castree (2006: 3) disavows what he calls the 'both/and agenda' for its 'intractable inability to "fix" [neoliberalism's] meanings with real-world referents' stemming from the use of multiple definitions where '"the real world" can only partly function as a "court of appeal" to resolve competing claims as to what is (or is not) neoliberal in degree or kind'. Castree (2006: 3) uses the peculiar analogy of water to illustrate his point, taking its meaning from positivist scientism as having liquid, gas and solid forms, yet always remaining water 'wherever and whenever it is'. This comparison, however, belies a faux realism as it fails to consider how different languages, cultures and individuals may have very different meanings for and understandings of 'water in general'. The idea that Inuit peoples have hundreds of words for the English language equivalent of 'snow' is an anthropological myth (Martin 1986), but it is nonetheless instructive of how 'the real world' can be viewed as little more than a semiotic construction, where even something as seemingly universal as water may be reduced to competing claims as to what it is (or is not) in degree or kind. In other words, Castree (2006) engages a very narrowly and privately defined understanding of the 'real', which is mobilised as a cipher for his own idealism.

England and Ward (2007: 251) are far more sympathetic, where the trick in reconciling a political economy approach with poststructuralist perspectives is 'to acknowledge the power of neoliberalism without reinscribing it as a unitary hegemonic project'. But while England and Ward acknowledge that an assemblage of ideas generally fall under the category of 'neoliberal', they seem to overlook the possibility of understanding hegemony in the Gramscian sense as neither unitary or monolithic, but itself rife with contingencies, ruptures and contradictions. Indeed, such variegated hegemonies play themselves out as neoliberalisations in myriad situated contexts (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010). Such recognition of the hegemony of neoliberalism (or more appropriately the hegemonies of neoliberalisations) as in Marxian approaches is not at all inconsistent with poststructuralist inspired notions of governmentality. Rather, the 'conduct of conduct' (Foucault 1991a) is part of how neoliberal hegemonic constellations have assembled themselves, particularly through networks of think tanks, whose embodied participants can be broadly conceived of as a transnational capitalist class (Carroll 2010). These situated actors face various forms of incorporation and resistance dependent upon context, and thus mutate their approaches to neoliberal governance accordingly. As such, the notion of hegemony is not diametrically opposed to a more nuanced understanding of neoliberalisation, nor is there an insurmountable disjuncture between the four forms of neoliberalism. These theoretical strands are reconcilable insofar as the hegemonic project has particular policy goals that reshape state formations, making them 'differently powerful' (Peck 2001). Simultaneously, principles from different systems of thought are combined into one coherent ideology (Laclau and Mouffe 2001), which becomes 'commonsense' allowing governance at a distance to operate. In turn, the circle is closed – and thrown back on itself – by individual subjects who reconstitute hegemony through the coalescence of circumstances of their everyday lives. Thus, the productive power of neoliberal ideology constitutes and constrains, but does not determine. Instead, as a process of becoming through which one simultaneously obtains the constitution of a subject(ivity) (Foucault 1988b) and undergoes subjection (Butler 1997), neoliberal subjectification works on individuals who are rendered as subjects and subjected to relations of power through discourse (Foucault 1982). Accordingly, as figure 2.1 indicates, neoliberalism can productively be understood as a circulating discourse.

ARTICULATING POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND MARXISM: HISTORICAL MATERIALISM, DISCURSIVE PERFORMATIVITY, AND THE FUTURE OF NEOLIBERALISM

Precisely because discourse can be defined as a group of statements belonging to a single system of formulation (Foucault 1972/2002), neoliberalism understood as discourse is able to articulate a synthesis of complementarities between theoretical positions that are seemingly mismatched. Yet there can be little doubt that some readers will retain their hardened epistemological positions and want to continue to see these interwoven strands as disparate. For example, from a poststructuralist perspective this model of neoliberalism as discourse can be criticised for assuming a Marxian political economy inspired structure insofar as it still recognises the hierarchy behind and involved in the construction of neoliberalism as an ideological hegemonic project. But when is poststructural critique ever actually 'beyond structure' in that regard? As Jacques Rancière (2006: 2) argues, 'critique acknowledges something's existence, but in order to confine it within limits', and accordingly poststructuralism necessarily acknowledges structuralism and so presupposes structure. Moreover, there is no single definition of poststructuralism, no agreed-upon methodological or theoretical imperatives. Instead, it refers to conceptual signposts collected from a diverse set of ideas based on the writings of authors like Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida. Indeed, it is inconsistent with poststructural concepts to codify itself in any concret-

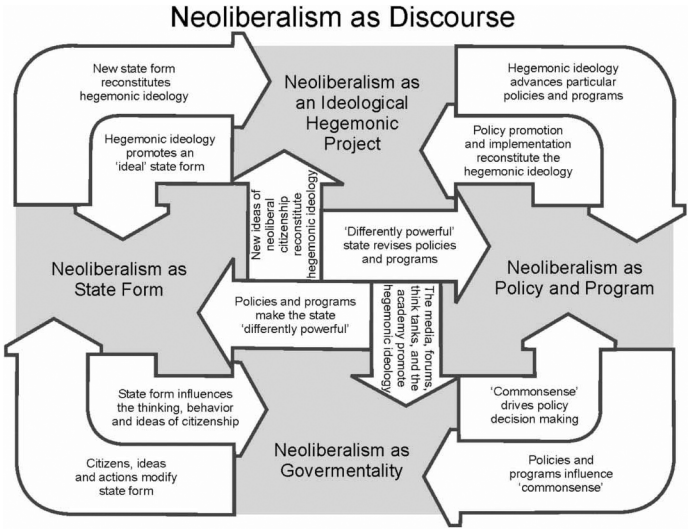

Figure 2.1. Neoliberalism as Discourse: A Circuitous Understanding of Neoliberalism.

ised manner (Harrison 2006). The term 'poststructuralism' itself was first applied to Derrida's practice of deconstruction in the 1970s. Yet he showed some degree of discomfort with this label, suggesting it was 'a word unknown in France until its "return" from the United States' (Derrida 1983/1988: 3). Instead, Derrida actually spoke of himself as both a communist and a Marxist (Ryan 1982), where *Specters of Marx* clearly exemplified his position on the ongoing relevance of Marx and his belief that we must continue to sift through Marx's possible legacies (Derrida 1994). Deleuze (1995: 171) also suggested he 'remained Marxist', having been intrigued by Marx's analysis of capitalism as an imminent system that is constantly overcoming its own limitations, he contended that 'any political philosophy must turn on the analysis of capitalism and the ways it has developed'. For his part, Foucault (1991b: 157) refused to define his position or 'play the part of one who prescribes solutions', regarding each of his books as an experiment that necessarily changed his opinions. Thus, one should not expect poststructuralist views to contribute to any sort of canon, for such a canon does not exist.

Poststructuralism instead begins from the position of destabilising hierarchies of meanings, labels, knowledges, ideas, categories and classifications, where the purpose is to challenge entrenched assumptions (Belsey 2002). Deconstruction affirms that any social text, whether spoken or written, contains implicit hierarchies, through which an order is imposed on 'reality' exercising a subtle repression, as these hierarchies exclude, subordinate and hide various other potential meanings (Lamont 1987). This in itself, however, is the recognition of the existence of certain structures through the distinctions we make, even if they are not given as natural material realities reflecting a 'real world' and only exist as abstractions produced by the systems of symbolisation we learn (Lacan 1998). Furthermore, poststructuralism welcomes a variety of perspectives to create multifaceted interpretations, even if these interpretations conflict with one another. So although poststructuralism is often seen as antagonistic to traditional Marxism inasmuch as it 'is believed to militate against the grand theory claims and the macrophenomena level analysis adopted by Marxism, to focus upon the fragmentary, the incompleteness, the local, the indeterminate, and the partial nature of theory' (Peters 2001: 7–8), poststructuralism might instead be understood as placing its theoretical attention on the social and political institutions that Marxists view as being determined by the economic, whereby the economic is not denied but instead its libidinal and liminal formations are suggested.

The relation between Marxism and poststructuralism can be understood as a shared understanding of capitalism as a central problem, where both attempt to decode and destabilise the power relations of capitalist axiomatics (Jameson 1997). In this sense, and notwithstanding the epistemological and ontological differences, Marxian political economy and poststructuralism are not necessarily incommensurable at all, and

the fact remains that Althusserian structuralist Marxism had a profound impact on thinkers we now call 'poststructuralist', as each came to terms with Marx in their own distinct ways (Peters 2001). In Foucault's (1991b: 59–60) own words:

> One of the essential points of my intellectual formation is found also in reflecting on science and the history of science. . . . But an analogous discourse also came out of the Marxist camp to the extent that Marxism . . . claimed to be a science or at least a general theory of the 'scientificity' of science: a kind of tribunal of reason which would permit us to distinguish what was science from what was ideology. . . . And I still recall the influence that Louis Althusser himself had on me in that regard.

In this sense, Foucault's entire philosophical project began from a critical reflection on Marxism and its (in)ability to offer a 'history of truth', where his 'intellectual course . . . ran somewhat parallel to that of the existential Marxists until the early 1960s' (Poster 1984: 3).

Nonetheless, the materialist interpretation of history is one key feature of Marxism that many believe cannot be easily reconciled with poststructuralism. Poststructuralism is often said to establish an orientation towards history that denies material historical truth, yet far from being a denial of temporality, it is instead to emphasise the forces that go beyond any telos of history that can be fully known, appreciated and articulated by human actors (Peters 2001). So while Foucault, for example, rejects Marxism as a particular theory of the mode of production and as a critique of political economy, he nonetheless forwards a critical view of domination which, like historical materialism, recognises all social practices as transitory, and all intellectual formations as integral with power and social relations (Poster 1984). Thus, although often critical of Marx, by Foucault's (1988a) own admission, his approach also bears striking parallels to Marxism. In Foucault's rendering, the historical relativity of all systems and structures (society, thought, theory and concepts) is recognised alongside a materialism of physical necessities (Olssen 2004). A discursive approach to Foucault thus represents a questioning of the very relation between structure and agency, which evokes a complementary between Marxian and poststructuralist thought. As such, Mark Poster (1984: 12) contends that Foucault's approach understands discourse and practice as a couplet, which enables Foucault 'to search for the close connection between manifestations of reason and patterns of domination. Foucault can study the way in which discourse is not innocent, but shaped by practice, without privileging any form of practice such as class struggle. He can also study how discourse in turn shapes practice without privileging any form of discourse'. In this sense, Foucault rejects Marx's understanding of historical materialism as a mechanism through which material (nondiscursive) practice is separated from discourse and

by which the latter is subsequently subordinated to the former (Olssen 2004). In contrast to Marx, the objective of Foucault's (1972/2002: 180) version of materialism as an archaeology of knowledge is to:

> Reveal relations between discursive formations and non-discursive domains (institutions, political events, economic practices and processes) [wherein] these rapprochements are not intended to uncover great cultural continuities, nor to isolate mechanisms of causality . . . nor does it seek to rediscover what is expressed in them . . . it tries to determine how the rules of formation that govern it . . . may be linked to non-discursive systems: it seeks to define specific forms of articulation.

For Foucault, unlike Marxian understandings, human destiny is not directed by a single set of factors and instead 'the forms of articulation and determination may differ in relation to the relative importance of different nondiscursive (material) factors in terms of both place and time' (Olssen 1999: 54).

Foucault's approach to discourse as a coupling with practice is of paramount importance to understanding neoliberalism as discourse for the central reasons of geography and history. Given the increasing appreciation for how the geographic and temporal placement of performances of neoliberalism make a difference – hence the concept of neoliberalisation replacing neoliberalism – it must be recognised that discourse does not have the same effects in any given location. The critical importance here is in wanting to avoid reducing all the heterogeneities of neoliberalism involved to just discursive ones (in the sense of language), thereby overlooking neoliberalism's specific variations in conjunctural articulations with different sorts of material practices on the ground. Hence, understanding neoliberalism as discourse is an approach that goes beyond simply the profusion and dissemination of language that occurs either though hegemonic ideology or governmentality, and necessarily recognises the material practices of state formation and policy and programme implementation that characterise the specificities of 'actually existing neoliberalism' (Brenner and Theodore 2002), or neoliberalisation in practice. In different geographical and institutional contexts neoliberal discourse will circulate and function in variegated ways that intersect with the local culture and political economic circumstances to continually (re)constitute 'the social'. This is not to 'treat "the social" as a residual effect of hegemonic projects and/or governmental rationalities' (Barnett 2005: 7), as neither 'the social' nor hegemonic projects ever amount to a fully actualised material reality. If neoliberalism is to be understood as a discourse, 'the real world' both Castree and Barnett suppose neoliberalism is premised upon is an impossible contradiction of the symbolic and imaginary connotations of language (Lacan 1977/2006). Again, this is not to deny materiality, but to recognise that the material and the discursive are always refracted through each other, and further that social practice is

transitory so that we can never quite put our finger on a definitive historical materialism that can be pinned down as a 'real world'. Of course Barnett and Castree take this notion of a 'real world' from the literature on neoliberalism, but they never pause to problematise its application. Instead, they seem to replicate its possibility and focus their critiques on how their versions of a 'real word' differ from those of other scholars concerned with neoliberalism/neoliberalisation. Put differently, the structure of hegemony that neoliberalism as discourse seemingly invokes is only possible through the discourse of neoliberalism itself. There is no 'before' discourse, and accordingly figure 2.1 shows no point of entry.

Suggesting that there is no entry point is not meant to imply an absence of historical trajectory to the idea of neoliberalism, it is simply meant as a reconfigured understanding of historical materialism through a Foucauldian archaeology. So while Peck's (2008) account of the 'prehistories' of 'protoneoliberalism' argues that there is a historical lineage to the development of neoliberalism, the lack of entry point here refers to the slow processes of discursive circulation that allowed a fringe utopian idea to congeal as a hegemonic imperative (see Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer 2006). There is clearly a history, but in line with Peck's (2008: 4) rejection of an 'immaculate ideational flashpoint', the circuitous paths of neoliberalism have no precise discernable beginning because it is impossible to disentangle them from previous ideologies and discourses. In this sense 'neoliberalism in general' is simply a semiotic sign of neoliberalisation, as it is necessarily 'something that stands for something else, to someone in some capacity' (Danesi and Perron 1999: 366). For its part, 'the social' is always a figment of 'the self', which is not a coherent entity but a constitution of conflicting tensions and knowledge claims (Derrida 2002; Lacan 1977/2006). In short, 'the social' and 'the self' are mutually constituted through discourse. Accordingly, what we are left with are rearticulations and representations of neoliberal discourse in the form of particular discourses of neoliberalisation, where individual actors take a proactive role in reshaping the formal practices of politics, policy and administration that comprise the dynamics and rhythms of sociocultural change.

There is no presentation or constitution, only representation and reconstitution, because as we produce social texts we create meanings. Such 'discursive performativity', Judith Butler (1993: 107) argues, 'appears to produce that which it names, to enact its own referent, to name and to do, to name and to make . . . [g]enerally speaking, a performative functions to produce that which it declares'. Hence, the issue is not about a purported reality of scientific truths, where neoliberalism is seen as an end, but the interpretation of cultural constructs (Duncan and Ley 1993), wherein neoliberalism becomes a means. The implications for the current neoliberal moment is that it is just that, a transitory moment on its way to becoming something else. And while there will be no perceptible line in

the sands of history where neoliberalism categorically ends, the patterns of contextually specific discourses of neoliberalisation will eventually and inevitably mutate into something that no longer has any resemblance to 'neoliberalism in general'.[1] The question then, provoked by Barnett (2005) and Castree (2006), is does neoliberalism in general ever exist? The answer, I would venture, is 'yes', but like anything we can name, and even things we can touch like water (to revisit Castree's peculiar analogy), they are always and only understood as representations through the performative repercussions of discourse. Some readers might contend that this caveat amounts to a 'no', and they would be correct if 'neoliberalism in general' is understood as a 'real world' referent, something I have been arguing against. Again, the rejection of an assumed 'real world' does not refuse a certain materiality to neoliberalism or other phenomena, but instead recognises materialism in the Foucauldian sense of an 'archaeology of knowledge' whereby discourse and practice, or theory and event, become inseparable. Thus, recognising neoliberalism as a general form becomes possible once we consider it through its discursive formation, whereby the four understandings of neoliberalism are read as an ongoing reconstitution of a particular political rationality (Brown 2003). Far from negating the need for resistance to neoliberalism, recognising neoliberalism as representation still requires social struggle. Moreover, and notwithstanding Gibson-Graham's (1996) criticism, the building of transnational solidarity through a 'larger conversation' is also needed, because such activity hastens the pace at which neoliberalism may recede into historical obscurity to be replaced with a new discourse, a novel representation that we can hope produces a more egalitarian social condition. Contestation actively works towards and opens pathways to achieving this goal (Purcell 2008; Springer 2010; Springer 2016), and while discourse may for a time reinscribe the power of particular logics, Foucault (1990) insists that no discourse is guaranteed. So while particular discourses prevail in some spaces, the potential for meanings to shift or for subaltern discourses to unsettle the orthodoxy remains.

CONCLUSION

In arguing for an understanding of neoliberalism as discourse, I do not presume that comprehending neoliberalism separately as a hegemonic ideology, a policy and programme, a state form or as a form of governmentality is wrong or not useful. Rather I have simply attempted to provoke some consideration for the potential reconcilability of the different approaches. My argument should accordingly be read as an effort to destabilise the ostensible incompatibility that some scholars undertaking their separate usage seem keen to assume. Without at least attempting to reconcile the four approaches we risk being deprived of a coherent con-

cept with which to work, and thus concede some measure of credibility to Barnett's (2005) claim that 'there is no such thing as neoliberalism'. Such a position renders the entire body of scholarship on neoliberalism questionable, as scholars cannot be sure that they are even discussing the same thing. More perilously, to accept such a claim throws the project of constructing solidarities across space into an uneasy quandary, where the resonant violent geographies of our current moment may go unnoticed, a condition that plays perfectly into the ideological denial maintained by the current capitalist order (Zizek 2011). In ignoring such relational possibilities for resistance to the contemporary zeitgeist, Barnett (2005) seems keen to engage in disarticulation ad nauseam. Yet deconstruction is meant to be interruptive not debilitating. As Gayatri Spivak (1996: 27) contends, 'Deconstruction does not say there is no subject, there is no truth, there is no history. . . . It is constantly and persistently looking into how truths are formed'. It is about noticing what we inevitably leave out of even the most searching and inclusive accounts of phenomena like neoliberalism, which opens up and allows for discursive understandings. Rather than making nice symmetrical accounts of the 'real' at the meeting point of representational performance and structural forces, neoliberalism understood as a discourse is attuned to processual interpretation and ongoing debate.

While there are inevitable tensions between the four views of neoliberalism that are not entirely commensurable, their content is not diametrically opposed, and indeed a considered understanding of how power similarly operates in both a Gramscian sense of hegemony and a Foucauldian sense of governmentality points towards a dialectical relationship. Understanding neoliberalism as discourse allows for a much more integral approach to social relations than speech performances alone. This is a discourse that encompasses material forms in state formation through policy and programme, and via the subjectification of individuals on the ground, even if this articulation still takes place through discursive performatives. By formulating discourse in this fashion, we need not revert to a presupposed 'real-world' referent to recognise a materiality that is both constituted by and constitutive of discourse. Instead, materiality and discourse become integral, where one cannot exist without the other. It is precisely this understanding of discourse that points to a similitude between poststructuralism and Marxian political economy approaches and their shared concern for power relations. I do not want to conclude that I have worked out all these tensions, my ambition has been much more humble. I have simply sought to open an avenue for dialogue between scholars on either side of the political economy/poststructuralist divide. The importance of bridging this gap is commensurate with 'the role of the intellectual . . . [in] shaking up habits, ways of acting and thinking, of dispelling commonplace beliefs, of taking a new measure of rules and institutions . . . and participating in the formation of a political

will' (Foucault, quoted in Goldstein 1991: 11–12). Such reflexivity necessarily involves opening ourselves to the possibility of finding common ground between the epistemic and ontological understandings of political economy and poststructuralism so that together they may assist in disestablishing neoliberalism's rationalities, deconstructing its strategies, disassembling its technologies and ultimately destroying its techniques. In changing our minds then, so too might we change the world.

NOTE

1. The financial crisis that began in late 2008 and Barack Obama's ascendancy to the presidency in the United States has led some commentators to proclaim neoliberalism dead (see Bello 2008; Rocamora 2009; Wallerstein 2008). While in a certain sense I would agree, I also worry that such pronouncements are premature (see Birch and Mykhnenko 2010; Smith 2008). The emerging debate surrounding 'postneoliberalism' (Brand and Sekler 2009; Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2010) nonetheless hints at a discursive shift as capitalist rationalities inevitably begin to change. I address this issue, and the zombie-like character of contemporary neoliberalism in greater detail in chapter 6.

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THREE
Anxious Geopolitics

The rise of neoliberalism can be understood as a particular form of anxiety that first began as a response to the atrocities of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, and the Soviet Union, and a belief that government intervention had jeopardised personal freedoms and was thus responsible for the carnage (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009). Following World War II, the Mont Pèlerin Society, the originary neoliberal think tank, resurrected classical liberalism's three basic tenets. The first of these is a concentrated focus on the individual, who is viewed as the most qualified to articulate her or his needs and desires, whereby society should be organised towards reducing barriers that impede this goal. Second, unregulated markets are considered the most effective and efficient means for promoting self-sufficiency, whereby individuals pursue their wants and needs via the mechanism of price. And finally, the belief that the state should be noninterventionist by emphasising the maintenance of competitive markets and guaranteeing individual rights fashioned primarily around a property regime (Hackworth 2007; Plehwe and Walpen 2006). Out of the geopolitical context of the war's aftermath, the origins of neoliberalism as a political ideology can be interpreted as reactionary to violence. In short, neoliberals theorised that violence could be curtailed by a return to the foundations of the Enlightenment and its acknowledgement of the merits of individualism. From the perspective of contemporary critical geopolitics, this historical context is somewhat ironic insofar as structural adjustment, fiscal austerity and free trade, the tenets of neoliberalism, are now 'augmented by the direct use of military force' (Roberts, Secor and Sparke 2003), where the US military in particular provides the 'hidden fist' that enables the hidden hand of the global free market to operate. Yet the relationship between capital accumulation and war is hardly new (see Harvey 1985), and the peaceful separation early neoliberals sought for

their economic agenda demonstrated a certain naivety. Indeed, while not all wars are capitalist, it is difficult to conceive of a circumstance wherein an economic ideology like neoliberalism could not come attendant to violence insofar as it espouses universal assumptions, seeks a global domain, and discourages heterogeneity as individuals are remade in the normative image of 'neoliberal proper personhood' (Kingfisher 2007). Either the lessons of colonialism were completely lost on the Mont Pèlerin Society, or they uncritically accepted its narrative appeal to the supposed higher purpose of a 'white man's burden' at face value.

Democracy building, a phrase that has been increasingly sullied by its rhetorical linkages to American military exercises, was also implicated in the revival of classical liberalism, as the catastrophic outcomes of authoritarianism during the two world wars allowed neoliberalism to be discursively positioned as the lone purveyor of political freedom. Following proxy wars that engaged appeals to democracy in Korea in the 1950s, and Vietnam in the 1960s and early 1970s, Keynesian political and economic forces began to unravel in the late 1970s and early 1980s, allowing the theorised coalescence between free markets and democracy to gain momentum as the supposed 'freedom' of neoliberalism became increasingly regarded as a salve for the global economic crisis (Brenner and Theodore 2002). Those states that refused to conform to the (neo)liberal democratic status quo were quickly regarded as 'rogue', 'failed' or were 'condemned to economic backwardness in which democracy must be imposed by sanctions and/or military force . . . by the global community of free nations' (Canterbury 2005: 2). This sentiment aligns with the central concern of Roberts, Secor and Sparke (2003: 889), who in outlining a 'neoliberal geopolitics', illuminate how neoliberal discourse has fostered a geopolitical vision of near infinite openness and interdependency, where those states that fall outside of this global vision are considered dangerous and thus subjected to 'enforced reconnection'.

Ideas surrounding the free market have accordingly had important effects on the establishment of neoliberalism as a particular geopolitical order, wherein securitisation presently provides the foundation for recalibrating and recasting geopolitical forms within market logics (Morrissey 2011). The stage for such critiques was set by early interventions in geopolitical economy (see Johnston and Taylor 1986), which encouraged the emergence of critical fusions between writings on the power of finance and markets (see Corbridge, Martin and Thrift 1994) and more explicitly geopolitical concerns (see Ó Tuathail 1996). In this vein, Cowen and Smith (2009: 43) have recently retheorised 'geoeconomics' as a more accurate appraisal of where the dominant concern of international relations is presently situated under neoliberalism, wherein 'market calculation supplants the geopolitical logic of state territoriality'. From here, they suggest that the transition to a globalised geoeconomic world under neoliberalisation 'is not a matter of some natural evolution in economic affairs,

but a case of active assembly' (Cowen and Smith 2009: 38). As part of this manufacture, the revival of classical economics further suggests that biopolitical subject formation has only intensified under neoliberalism (Ferguson and Gupta 2002), allowing what was once a fringe utopian idea to materialise as a divergent yet related series of neoliberalisations as an increasing number of states embrace neoliberal modalities (Peck 2008). One of the key tasks for critical geopolitics at the current conjuncture of deepening neoliberalisation and systemic crisis is to articulate a 'geographical vision of a world in which the market is at once tamed, decentralized and "disestablished", and where empowered global citizens are able to challenge opposing elements of the present dynamic of globalization' (Agnew and Corbridge 1995: 227).

Following this introduction, I begin this chapter by demonstrating how a critical geopolitics has contributed to a reading of neoliberalism that challenges the assumed inevitability and all-encompassing 'bulldozer effect' that pervades in popular media accounts of free market capitalism and its colloquial understanding as 'globalisation'. I emphasise neoliberalism's mongrel character, by attending to the series of mutations, hybridisations, and variegations across space that foreground the role of geography in creating multiple forms of processual and unfolding neoliberalisations, rather than a singular and static neoliberalism. I then turn my attention to the continuing role of the state and address how discourse functions to secure consent for neoliberalism's particular political rationality. I hope to remind readers that although the role of the state has become subtler under neoliberalism through a reconfiguration of the citizen-subject via processes of governmentality, this does not mean that it has entirely exited the political scene. To the contrary, I argue that the transformed role of the state under neoliberalisation is susceptible to expressions of authoritarianism and violence, which brings the state back into plain view as it comes into conflict with those individuals who have been marginalised by neoliberalism's belligerent regulatory reforms and discriminatory policy initiatives.

Recognition of the transformative practices through which capitalist expansion became tied to legitimating discourses is essential to understanding the power of neoliberalism. While mainstream analyses of conflict theory largely focus on 'local' origins of conflict by invoking a geopolitics of 'backward' cultural practices as the best explanations for violence (see Huntington 1996; Kaplan 2000), this reading completely dismisses the influence of ideology and economics. The geopolitical imagination of violence vis-à-vis neoliberalism is such that violence is treated as an externality. This problematic vision engenders Orientalist discourses that insidiously posit 'local' cultures as being exclusively responsible for any and all ensuing bloodshed following neoliberalisation, thereby erasing the contingency, fluidity and interconnectedness of the 'global' political economy of violence. Here we can look to the influence

of Edward Said's (2003) work, which played an important role in shaping early incarnations of critical geopolitics and made significant contributions to a broader interest in how geopolitical representations and practices produced notions of 'us' and 'them', or 'Self' and 'Other'. In a contemporary sense, Orientalism licenses further neoliberal reforms, as neoliberalisation is positioned as a 'civilising' enterprise in the face of any purported 'savagery' (Springer 2015). Neoliberalism is rarely called into question and is either explicitly promoted (see Fukuyama 1992) or implicitly accepted (see Sen 1999) as both the essential condition of human development and the panacea for violence. Such Orientalism places neoliberalism 'under erasure', which is the focus of the final section before the conclusion.

PRODUCING GEOGRAPHICAL PURITY? BEYOND MONOLITHISM AND INEVITABILITY

Neoliberalism as an object of scholarly interest has undergone an incredible expansion in the last decade. One major implication of the increasingly voluminous literature on neoliberalism is that definitional consensus about what is actually meant by the term has waned considerably (Peck 2004). Neoliberalism has been critiqued as suffering from promiscuity (involved with too many theoretical perspectives), omnipresence (treated as a universal or global phenomenon) and omnipotence (identified as the cause of a wide variety of social, political and economic changes) (Clarke 2008). As already noted in the preceding chapter, some commentators are so troubled by the 'larger conversation' that neoliberalism invokes, or alternatively so disillusioned by the potential explanatory power of the concept, that there now exists a willingness to proclaim neoliberalism a 'necessary illusion' (Castree 2006) or simply that 'there is no such thing' (Barnett 2005). These misgivings are centred on the contemporary pervasiveness of neoliberalism in academia and a concern that by constituting neoliberalism as a powerful, expansive and self-reproducing logic, we lend it the appearance of monolithic and beyond reproach. There is a great deal to be gained from such critiques, particularly because, as I have argued, it is important to dispute the neoliberalism-as-monolithism argument for failing to appreciate space and time as open and always becoming. Similarly, in concentrating exclusively on an externally produced neoliberalism, we overlook the local geographies of existing political economic circumstances and institutional frameworks, where variability, internal constitution, societal influences and individual agency all play a role in (re)producing, circulating and facilitating neoliberalism's advance. Insofar as critical geopolitics is about interrogating, deconstructing and undermining essentialist geopolitical discourses (Dalby 1991), it is important to recognise how scholarly contributions to

destabilising notions of an overarching neoliberalism aligns to this intellectual project.

Universality has long been one of the primary geopolitical notions associated with 'globalisation', and this remains the case with respect to its offshoot as 'neoliberalism'. The popular idea among both advocates and adversaries of neoliberalism is that its political economic rationale proceeds as a singular and monolithic framework that has the ability to wholly transform existing local economies. To those who promote neoliberalism, this abstraction does the work needed to legitimise the idea of creating a level playing field for markets and material rewards, and it often comes attendant to the invocation of inevitability, which is captured in the slogan 'there is no alternative'. Such a geopolitical world vision is little more than idealism about the virtues of free markets, openness and global economic integration (Roberts, Secor and Sparke 2003). To those who oppose neoliberalism, it is often used in the opposite way, insofar as the supposed monolithism and inevitability of neoliberalism's economic imperatives lends credence to a sense of loss for 'local' community, culture and practices to an uncaring and aggressive 'global' force. Yet despite the shared assumption of a sweeping dispersion of a 'pure' or 'paradigmatic' neoliberalism that both backers and challengers have seemingly embraced, arguably the single most important idea critical geopolitics has lent to theories of neoliberalism is that 'neoliberalism' itself is an abstraction. The discourse of neoliberalism proceeds in such a way that it conceals the geographical variations and contingencies that necessarily exist between different political economic contexts. Thus, by recognising the mutations and articulations of neoliberalism on its travels around the globe, we engage a critical geopolitics whereby it only makes sense to speak of a series of partial, shifting and thoroughly hybridised 'neoliberalisations', rather than a rigid, universal and fully realised 'neoliberalism'. As Agnew and Corbridge (1995) contend, critical geopolitics is a refusal to be confined to a reading of a geographically ordered world rooted in notions of fixity over fluidity and stasis over change.

The fact that the idea of 'purity' with regards to neoliberalism has only recently been problematised with any sustained sense of rigour (see Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010; England and Ward 2007), speaks to the veracity of the geopolitical imagination that positions neoliberalism in general terms as an all-encompassing programme. Yet for geographers and other scholars to insist that in every specific instance where neoliberal ideology has been adopted there will be messiness that results in a series of geopolitically distinct hybrids should not be all that difficult to accept or envision. Such thinking simply reflects the actual nature of any policy legacy or institutional inheritance. For example, Fordism's arrival into an array of political economic situations was in every instance a messy and thoroughly contingent process, an evolution that becomes even more obvious when we consider colonialism's arrival in various

contexts. The violence meted out in the promotion of colonialism, the different actors and agents involved in its advance, and the varying degrees of accommodation and resistance colonial governments were ultimately met with demands that we acknowledge a sense of heterogeneity. Such messiness does not suggest that these two particular incarnations of capitalism were unsuccessful in the specific contexts in which they unfolded. Most scholars recognise, in terms of both Fordism and colonialism that they did in fact arrive, where attentiveness to their particular geographies serves to simply highlight their plurality. Thus, instead of Fordism, we have Fordisms, and instead of colonialism, we have colonialisms, whereby any notion of a 'singular' or 'pure' form in these instances is easily recognised as an illusory abstraction. The same multiplicity must likewise be acknowledged with respect to neoliberalism.

In appreciating various neoliberalisms – or 'neoliberalisations' as is becoming the convention in the literature – we can look to the United States as an example that supports such a particularised and contingent reading of neoliberalism. While the United States is often considered as both a paradigmatic example of neoliberalism and the prime driver of its global engine through American unilateralism, there is considerable divergence to be found here too. While little doubt remains among critical scholars and activists that the US-led 'new imperialism' that has unfolded in Afghanistan and Iraq following 9/11 is a continuation of the neoliberal project (Harvey 2003), the notion of 'American protectionism' is much harder to square-up to a neoliberal agenda. Protectionism is contradictory to neoliberal ideals and is thus demonstrative of the limits of thinking about neoliberalism as a pure ideology that is immune to realpolitik. The prevalent influence of nationalist discourses like American protectionism gives a strong indication of a lack of purity even in the ostensibly quintessential neoliberal case of the United States. Neoliberalism in its actual practice, as opposed to its generalised abstraction, is thus about securing the interests of entrenched elites more than anything else (Harvey 2005). When and where such interests are not secured by neoliberal policies, neoliberalism is placed at odds with the utopian purity that the ideology envisions.

Peck and Tickell's (2002) processed-based analysis of neoliberalisation along with Brenner and Theodore's (2002) concept of 'actually existing neoliberalism' have been instrumental in contributing to a complete overhaul in the way that geographers theorise neoliberalism, whereby emphasis is now placed on multiple hybrid forms. This is precisely what Cowen and Smith (2009: 38) refer to when they point to the 'geographical unevenness and radical incompleteness' of neoliberalism as a geopolitical-cum-geoeconomic worldview. Yet where do we draw the line between neoliberal hybridity and pluralisation on the one hand, and the rejection of neoliberalism on the other? In many ways this question typifies the entire literature on neoliberalism. But neoliberalism is not alone

here, we could subject Fordism, or even capitalism more generally to the same set of delineating questions and arrive at the same impasse. If universality is to be treated in Tsing's (2005: 1) interpretation of 'only be[ing] charged and enacted in the sticky materiality of practical encounters' then the universal is not abstract, it always provokes new responses, and always creates friction. The replacement of 'neoliberalism' in the literature with 'neoliberalisation', is precisely meant to recognise the nonabstract quality of neoliberalism, which provokes new responses and gives rise to friction. What this means is that in the contemporary zeitgeist, neoliberalism is seldom rejected outright in those policy environments it comes into contact with, as its discursive formations take on 'common sense' qualities that penetrate to the heart of political subject formation. Thus regardless of any critically minded desire to move beyond neoliberal strictures, there is a certain continuity and contagiousness to neoliberalism that must be appreciated if we ever hope to slay the dragon and leave this, the most unforgiving and revanchist version of capitalism, truly in the past.

Given what geographers know about the nature of domination and resistance, that is, that neither is ever a 'complete' application of power, but rather a continuing, unfolding and circuitous process (Sharp, Routledge, Philo and Paddison 2000), it is increasingly important to think of neoliberalism in the same light. Put differently, if we acknowledge that geography and friction impact upon neoliberalism in its actually existing circumstances insofar as they render its abstract, paradigmatic and pure form untenable, then geography and friction must also leave traces of neoliberalism, however vague, when and where encounter occurs. In short, if the 'pure' is impossible in neoliberalism's travels, encounters and articulations, then so too is its complete rejection. Any supposed 'completeness' of rejection actually reveals the abstraction of neoliberalism-as-monolithism, precisely because friction will invariably leave some residual trace of neoliberalism. Moreover, if the universal idea of neoliberalism always creates friction in its actually existing processes as 'neoliberalisation', then it becomes impossible to point to the idea of a complete 'rejection' in a singular moment of revolution – however widespread such an uprising might actually be – as this assumes an inverse sense of purity. Instead, there is a need to recognise the processual nature of neoliberalisation and the way that such a vision transforms citizen-subjects through biopolitics.

THE ILLUSION OF STATE DISSOLUTION: GOVERNMENTALITY, NEOLIBERAL SUBJECT FORMATION AND VIOLENCE

Critical geopolitical readings of neoliberalism have contributed to an understanding that goes beyond considering neoliberalism as little more

than a 'top-down' government policy. Discourse analysis has allowed scholars to appreciate the internalisation of neoliberal logics at various institutional and even individual or embodied scales. In contrast to the doctrinaire interpretation, there now exists a considerable literature on neoliberalism which foregrounds the role of governmentality (see Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Lemke 2001; Mitchell 2006; Ong 2006). Thus, while the basic tenet of neoliberalism in theory is that it involves less rather than more government interference, its actual practice as neoliberalisation is a much different beast. Neoliberalism is now more accurately regarded as a process of transformation purposefully engaged by states to remain economically competitive within an international milieu. It proceeds as both a quantitative form of destruction and discreditation entailing the 'roll-back' of state capacities, and as a qualitative form of construction and consolidation, which sees the 'roll-out' of reconfigured economic management systems, and an invasive social agenda centred on urban order, surveillance and policing (Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002).

Neoliberal reason, and its extension as biopolitical subject formation has been largely facilitated through 'common sense' rhetoric (Peck 2010), so that discourse itself can now be appropriately understood as a primary component in the creation of consent for neoliberalism. Particular discursive formations like 'good governance' (Springer 2010) and 'human security' (Springer 2009) facilitate penetration at the level of the subject, making the formation of a political rationality possible (Brown 2005). Foucault (1978) has demonstrated how the subject is subjected to relations of power as she or he is individualised, categorised, classified, hierarchised, normalised, surveilled and provoked to self-surveillance. As such, neoliberal subjectification is the process whereby one memorises the truth claims that one has heard and converts them into rules of conduct (Foucault 1988). This process of internalisation functions to effectively lock in the rights of capital. Moreover, as emergent disciplinary rationalities, strategies, technologies and techniques coagulate under neoliberal subjectification through the proliferation of particular discursive formations, the structural inequalities of capital are increasingly likely to go unrecognised as 'anomalies' or 'externalities'. In this regard, neoliberal penetration at the level of governmentality must be convincing, because if the social body does not come to accept the supposed 'wisdom' of neoliberalism, tensions will rise and may erupt into violence.

The rolling-back of the state is a rationale of neoliberal governance, not an informed choice of the autonomous agents that comprise the nation. Thus, resistance to neoliberalism may actually provoke a more despotic outlook as a state moves to ensure that its reforms are pushed through, particularly if the changes are rapid and a valorising discourse for neoliberalisation has not already become widely circulated. This is why effective subjectification and the production, functioning and circu-

lation of legitimising discursive formations become a determinant to the degree of authoritarianism needed under neoliberalisation. Yet the possibility of full acceptance is illusory on two counts. First, every member of a society is never going to fully agree with and accept the prevailing discourses. Thus, we find those marginalised by neoliberal reform in continuous struggle to have their voices heard, which is frequently met with state violence when expressed as dissent. Second, social processes have an inherent temporality, meaning that they never sit still. Geopolitical ideas of spatial uniformity and temporal stasis pervade media accounts of a fully integrated 'global village', but they are fundamentally reliant upon the problematic notions of monolithism and inevitability, as though space-time has only one possible trajectory (Massey 2005). In the popular imagination, there is little acknowledgement of the discursive work that goes into the (re)production and distribution of neoliberal ideas in a diverse range of contexts (Plehwe and Walpen 2006). As the utopian discourse of neoliberalism rubs up against empirical realities – such as heightened inequality – citizens are more likely to express dismay with particular characteristics of neoliberalisation, most prominently the privatisation of essential social provisions such as education and health care. Recourse to violence thus becomes one of the few disciplinary options left to governments transformed by neoliberalisation as they attempt to retain legitimacy.

The governmentality literature has enabled a reading of neoliberalism that sees its 'disciplinary power' (Gill 1995) go beyond a variety of regulatory, surveillance and policing mechanisms that are instituted and 'locked in' despite what the population base desire. A discourse analysis of neoliberalism interprets the 'dirty work' of neoliberalism to be much more subtle, wherein neoliberal ideals are articulated, internalised and borne out through the citational chains of the discourses they promote via governmentality (Springer 2010). Yet this reading does not prevent an appreciation for the more overt mechanisms that neoliberalism retains at its disposal. For example, the erosion of democratic control and accountability that comes attendant to neoliberalism would not be possible without a variety of legal and constitutional devices, whereby the economic model is insulated from popular scrutiny and demands (Overbeek 2000). At the same time, privatised means and decision makers who are not accountable to the general citizenry increasingly determine the provision of public goods and services. These constrictions of welfare provision serve to intensify the politicisation of citizenship and immigration issues, as citizens and 'Others' come into conflict over who is entitled and who is unentitled to what little remaining protection and welfare the state provides (Ong 2006; Sparke 2006).

Given the exclusions of the poor, the implicit acceptance of violently repressing those groups who seek a decent wage, and in light of the rising inequality neoliberalism has facilitated (Rapley 2004), it is perhaps

unsurprising that the processes of neoliberalisation have coincided with a new pattern of conflict. This conflict appears to be concerned with the identity group (however defined) and not the nation-state, so that sources of these 'new wars' lay predominantly within rather than between states (Desai 2006; Kaldor 2006). Such a configuration of conflict can be seen as a reflection of the geographic restructuring and uneven development that neoliberalism provokes (Harvey 2005). Former Keynesian patterns of redistribution are replaced with intrastate competition, as particular cities or regions become the focal points for development and investment, while peripheral areas are largely ignored. Following from a geopolitical imagination of indigenous-as-rural, marginalisation is furthered and differences are magnified, resulting in a pattern of conflict primarily between 'underdogs' (Uvin 2003), as 'topdogs' insulate themselves from reprisal through an ever tightening security regime that utilises both the apparatus of the state, such as authoritarian clampdowns on public space (Springer 2015), and private measures visible in the landscape, such as fenced properties patrolled by armed guards (Coleman 2004).

This emergent securitisation logic of neoliberalism also factors into contemporary assessments of global risk, which are often conceptualised as resulting from the problems of 'nongovernance' and 'misgovernance'. Contra the idea of neoliberalism as an unqualified dissolution of state power, in the aftermath of 9/11 a public discourse has emerged in the United States around the idea that certain states have too little power. Spaces that are thought of as politically well-managed coincide with high degrees of economic integration and financial liberalisation, thereby signalling the ostensible 'need' for rolling-out new governance structures in those spaces, like Afghanistan, where the state is thought to have failed to administer space 'effectively' (Mitchell 2010). Within the imaginative geopolitical scripting of the neoliberal moment, spaces deemed weak, disorderly and ungoverned are also considered as sites where terrorism, organised crime and drug trafficking may run rampant and spill across borders to threaten those domains where sovereign power, and importantly markets, are regarded as secure (Morrissey 2011). Mitchell (2010) argues that this language of failure and threat is further implicated in the formation of new subjectivities as individuals are increasingly governed through intensified policing and security logics. The result is not only a repositioning of the 'normative' vis-à-vis political subjects by 'opening them up to powerful market forces and technologies of the self such as privatization, entrepreneurialism, and responsiblization' (Mitchell 2010: 290), but an intensification of an authoritarian rationale at all levels of governance.

The violent responses to protest movements challenging neoliberal policies in cities as dispersed as Genoa, Mexico City, Seoul, Stockholm, Asuncion, Lilongwe, Port Moresby and Toronto serve as instructive ex-

amples of how the unmediated usage of public space and the very practice of democracy have come into conflict with neoliberalism and its securitisation discourse. Such counterhegemonic struggles can be read through the lens of what Routledge (2003) calls 'antigeopolitics' insofar as protesters increasingly assert independence from the state by challenging not only its policing-cum-militarising logics but also the amplification of geoeconomic power as neoliberalism continues its spread into various geographical contexts and institutional frameworks around the globe. The diffusion of contestation to this 'new world order' is unsurprising when we appreciate how neoliberalism pivots around the extraction of economic surplus from countries incorporated into the global capitalist system in such a way that necessitates local authoritarian regimes to ensure its functionality (Canterbury 2005; Springer 2015). Elections are held to confer a semblance of legitimacy, but democratic empowerment through processes such as policy orientation and decision-making in the allocation of resources is never advanced. Instead, neoliberalisation actually creates opportunities for elite groups with strong commercial interest to influence political development away from democracy (Jönsson 2002). Local elites often endorse neoliberal policies such as privatisation as an opportunity to rapidly line their own pockets through informal control over the bidding process in the allocation of contracts (Springer 2015). Meanwhile, international investors all too frequently concern themselves only with the economic bottom line, or the assurance that natural resources and cheap goods continue to flow regardless of the localised environmental damage and repressive labour conditions, which are treated econometrically as mere externalities. In the end, it is not the accountable, democratic state that is the ideal political shell for neoliberalism (Jayasuriya 2000), nor is it an absentee or minimalist state that is required. Rather, neoliberalism seeks a 'differently powerful' (Peck and Tickell 2002) regulatory state capable of insulating its institutions from capture by those vested interests that inhabit such institutions as parliaments, and even more so from public opinion.

GRAPHING THE HIDDEN FIST: ILLUMINATING NEOLIBERALISM UNDER ERASURE

Within the realm of popular geopolitics, 'African', 'Asian' and 'Islamic' cultures are repeatedly imagined as being somehow ingrained with an ostensibly 'natural' penchant for violence, a trend that has only increased in the context of the 'war on terror'. The public performance of such ideas feeds into particular geopolitical aims, thereby enabling them to gather momentum and acquire a certain form of 'common sense' validity. The imaginative geographies of such Orientalism are constructions that fuse distance and difference together through a series of spatialisations that

not only mark particular people as 'Other', but configure 'our' space of the familiar as separate and distinct from 'their' unfamiliar space that lies beyond (Gregory 2004; Said 2003). This is precisely the discourse that colonialism mobilised to construct its authority in the past, and in the current context of the Global South, Orientalism can be productively regarded as neoliberalism's latitude inasmuch as it affords a powerful discursive space for the promotion of free market ideas. This linking of neoliberalism and Orientalism may seem somewhat counterintuitive when neoliberalism is taken at face value. After all, the neoliberal doctrine conceives itself as upholding a liberal internationalism based on visions of a single human race peacefully united by a common code of conduct featuring deregulated markets, free trade, shared legal norms and states that feature civic liberties, electoral processes and representative institutions (Gowen 2001). Yet growing recognition for neoliberalisation's role in rising inequality, continuing poverty, authoritarian tendencies and a litany of other social ills (see Bourdieu 1998; Duménil and Lévy 2011; Giroux 2004; Goldberg 2009; MacEwan 1999), hints at the multiple 'erasures' neoliberal ideology has thus far attempted to engage through its rhetorical smokescreen.

Although neoliberalism was not her concern when Spivak asked 'can the subaltern speak?' there is nonetheless a remarkable resonance that can be drawn from her argument. Spivak (1988: 24–25) contends that dominance is maintained through silencing, where:

> In the face of the possibility that the intellectual is complicit in the persistent constitution of Other as the Self's shadow, a possibility of political practice for the intellectual would be to put the economic 'under erasure,' to see the economic factor as irreducible as it reinscribes the social text, even as it is erased, however imperfectly, when it claims to be the final determinant or the transcendental signified.

This description exemplifies the neoliberal project, and is precisely what the Mont Pèlerin Society had in mind when, in the postwar conjuncture of Keynesian acceptance, they set out to reconstitute a politically rightist – and in their minds righteous – intellectual agenda (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009). These original neoliberals knew from the outset that their economic ideals would have to become so deeply entrenched in society that they would become like oxygen: utterly pervasive and altogether invisible. Only then could the final determinant of their 'end of history' and transcendence to a utopian 'global village' be properly signified. Neoliberalism, as proselytised by its apostles, advances such a self-evident and unquestionable image of itself that the phrase 'there is no alternative' has taken on mantric connotations.

Thomas Friedman (1999) is one such advocate, arguing that any attempt to refuse neoliberalism is an 'olive tree' – or the foolish preserve of tradition-bound tribes and terrorists – which stands haplessly in the path

of the mighty 'Lexus' being driven inexorably forward by the promise of prosperity for all. To the question of who drives this luxury automobile an answer is – in keeping with neoliberalism's abstract doctrine – purposefully elusive. The class project of neoliberalism that Harvey (2005) illuminates is kept 'under erasure' by Friedman, while 'Others' wander aimlessly in the shadows of their ostensibly static cultures. Yet near the end of his book, Friedman (1999: 443) lets the cat out of the bag when he suggests, 'the hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist'. The key to neoliberal dominance is thus, as Friedman celebrates, and Sparke (2004) critiques, American geopolitical supremacy. As Morrissey (2011: 894) argues, the US military machine operates with a 'neoliberal policing raison d'être', wherein 'therapeutic discourses of risk management and explicit appeals to neoliberal economic universality' are advanced under the ostensible premise that the potentiality of a volatile global political economy – made possible by 'rogue states' and 'terrorists' – necessitates securitisation by US military force. And while this fist became astonishingly visible in Iraq, the vicious blow following 9/11 was not an opening-round knockout punch. As is the case in other spaces like Cambodia (see Springer 2015), the hidden fist of Orientalism had long been setting the stage to ensure the fight in Iraq was already fixed where it counted most: the domain of American public opinion.

In the absence of natural disasters, which have been used as opportunities to push through unpopular neoliberal reforms on peoples and societies too disoriented to protect their interests, Orientalism lays the necessary groundwork for manufactured 'shocks' in forging openings for neoliberalism (Klein 2007). Like the originary state-level neoliberal experiment in Chile (Challies and Murray 2008), the current round of imperialism-cum-neoliberalisation in the Middle East is exemplary of American geostrategic meddling and a version of militarism premised on folding distance into difference. Would unsubstantiated suspicions of weapons of mass destruction have been enough to galvanise (much of) the American public in the march to war if Bush and his hawks had their sights set on Canada rather than Iraq? We can only speculate, but without a significant dose of Orientalism such fallacious claims would, in all probability, have been taken at face value. Notwithstanding the hilarious Michael Moore film *Canadian Bacon*, which satirises American military supremacy and the geographing of 'friends' and 'enemies', a bombing and subsequent occupation of Ottawa would scarcely have materialised. Likewise, it was 'faraway/unknown' Santiago and not 'nearby/familiar' Ottawa that played host to Washington's subversions in the lead up to the 'other 9/11' in 1973.

Attention to how the 'geo' of particular geographies, including imaginative ones, are 'graphed', or 'produced by multiple, often unnoticed, space-making and space-changing processes' is of vital importance (Sparke 2005). Sparke (2007) argues that such acknowledgement is itself

an ethical commitment to examine the *exclusions* – which can be read in the double sense of 'under erasure' and 'othering' – in the production of any specific geographical truth claims. The 'graphing' of neoliberalism involves recognising its variegated geographical expressions (Peck and Tickell 2002), imperialist impulses (Escobar 2004; Hart 2008) and authoritarian responses (Canterbury 2005; Springer 2015), all of which confound the theoretical niceties of a smooth-space, flat-earth where neoliberalism rolls out across the globe without friction and resistance. To cope with the discrepancies between these material 'graphings' and a doctrine ostensibly premised on peace, neoliberalism has Orientalism at its indemnifying disposal, where 'aberrant', 'violent' and 'local' cultures can be used to explain away any failings and thereby leave its class project unscathed. Orientalism is employed to legitimise the double standards neoliberalism invokes in the global distribution of violence (Sparke 2007), to code the violence of antineoliberal resistance, and to geographically distribute and locate blame for violence by insisting that violence sits in particular, 'Oriental' places, an argument I attend to in greater detail in chapter 5. The responsibility of critical geopolitics in this 'age of resurgent imperialism' (Hart 2006) is thus to shine a light on such 'neoliberalism under erasure' so that the virulence of its 'othering' is laid bare and therein its virility may be refused.

There is nothing quintessentially 'neoliberal' about Orientalism. The coalescence of neoliberalism with Orientalism is dependent upon the context in which neoliberalisation occurs. Said (2003: 9) once argued that Orientalism is entwined with the project of imperialism, 'supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination'. As the latest incarnation of 'Empire' (Hardt and Negri 2000), the principles, practices, theories and attitudes of imperialism remain intact under neoliberalism, so it is unsurprising to discover that the discourses that support such a project similarly remain unchanged. When applied to the Global South, neoliberalisation proceeds as a 'civilising' project, operating in much the same way that colonialism and modernisation theory did before it. In short, neoliberalism positions itself as the confirmation of reason on 'barbarians' who dwell 'out there', beyond the gates of 'Western civilisation'. The implications of neoliberalisation thus speak to a colonialism that intrudes upon the present (Gregory 2004), wherein Enlightenment-based ideologies such as neoliberalism allow the Global North to continue to essentialise the peoples, places and cultures of the Global South as intrinsically violent. Neoliberalism maintains this *Self*-aggrandising sense of rationalism precisely because it looks to reason rather than experience as the foundation of certainty in knowledge, a notion that becomes clear when we recognise that the multiple ruptures that have accompanied the worldwide unfolding of neoliberalism – be-

tween practice and ideology; reality and doctrine; consequence and vision – are not simply unintentional side effects of this disciplinary enterprise, but are actually among its most fundamental features (Brenner and Theodore 2002).

CONCLUSION

We can never attribute neoliberalism to a direct calculable expression, whereby 'A' plus 'B' equals neoliberalism. Although this idea is prominent in the popular geopolitical imagination, to attempt such a formulaic interpretation summons ideas of a singular or pure neoliberalism, a dead letter idea that has been altogether dismissed by geographers. Neoliberalism is a theoretical abstraction that comes up against geographical limits, and hence its 'actually existing' circumstances are never paradigmatic. In this sense, the rising tide against neoliberalism and the geographically dispersed protests that signify and support such a movement necessarily occur in terrains that always exceed neoliberalism (Hart 2008; Leitner, Peck and Sheppard 2007). Yet it is vitally important to recognise how the geographies of contestation can be interpreted as a shared sense of betrayal with what can be broadly defined as 'neoliberal policy goals'. Accordingly, there exists a growing recognition that transnational solidarity is inseparable from 'local' movements, and must be built upon relational understandings of both resistance to, and the violence of neoliberalism (see Featherstone 2005; Springer 2012; Wainwright and Kim 2008). Increased class tensions and the intensifying policing, surveillance and security measures that inevitably arise from such strained relations are some of the most noticeable outcomes of a state's neoliberalisation, so while there are variegations and mutations to account for in neoliberalism's travels, there is also a need to appreciate the similar deleterious outcomes that do in fact all too frequently arise.

By offering a more attentive reading of the 'glocal' implications of neoliberalisation, critical geopolitics has challenged the supposed inevitability and universality that neoliberal ideology purports (see Roberts, Secor and Sparke 2003). Agnew and Corbridge (1995: 5) hinted at these ideas nearly two decades ago, when in establishing an agenda for the then 'emerging school of "critical geopolitics"' they argued, 'It is a world economy marked above all by a globalization of production, exchange and information flows which has brought with it not so much spatial homogenization as a new round of geographical differentiation and uneven development at all spatial scales'. In a similar fashion, in accounting for the contestations that have arisen in response to neoliberal policy initiatives, critical geopolitics has likewise been influential in redressing the notion that the state disappears, in particular by focusing on how a Leviathan monopoly of violence is continually evident in both the prac-

tices and discourses of the neoliberalised state. Finally, critical geopolitics has much to contribute in terms of deconstructing neoliberalism's intersections with Orientalism and the racist discourses of alterity that are supported in producing 'proper' neoliberal subjects. Transforming popular imaginative geographies is vital to reconfiguring processes of subject formation away from neoliberal modalities. Promoting critical geopolitics and applying the reflexivity it necessitates – both within and beyond the academy – are thus crucial practices in facilitating the circulation of alternative discursive formations that break from the current spell of neoliberal 'common sense'.

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FOUR
Delusion, Disillusion and Denial

In 'grappling with the economic (and other) geographies of capitalism', Ray Hudson (2006: 389) argues that 'simply trying to wish away the structural power of capital is a curious theoretical and political strategy for those on the Left – and one that is doomed from the outset as the basis for a radical and emancipatory politics'. It is these 'other' geographies of capitalism, namely those of impoverishment, socioeconomic disparity and in particular violence, that form the basis of concern in this chapter. In identifying how poverty and inequality can be understood in relation to violence, I am convinced that a critical political economy perspective is never separate from a discursive approach and a necessary precursor insofar as it positions us in such a way that allows us to recognise the inherent violences of capital. Indeed, much of the political economic critique that has been generated on the Left proceeds from a position of viewing capitalism as the central social institution of the modern world (Palan 2000: 10), and as Duménil and Lévy (2004: 269) contend, the 'basic function of economic "violence" remains a core feature of capitalism'. Notwithstanding the criticisms of Amin and Thrift (2005), who ask 'what's Left?' about a Marxian political economy, and the parallel position of Gibson-Graham's (1996) project to move beyond Marxism for what they view as its discursive fetishisation of capital, in line with Hudson (2006), but from a decidedly antistatist and anarchistic position, I believe our world remains to a considerable extent produced – in both a discursive and Lefebvreian sense (Lefebvre 1991) – by the logic of capital. In light of the successful expansion of the neoliberal project that currently envelops the globe, it would seem that while Karl Marx got a whole lot wrong (see Springer 2016), he has nonetheless been proven correct in his view that the logic of capital maintains a self-expanding value that reproduces itself across time and space, penetrating and creating new and

distant markets (Harvey 2003; 2005; Palan 2000). The role of neoliberalism in this success in recent years is hard to deny, as the pervasiveness of its discourse has undeniably facilitated the continuing expansion of the capitalist project. In acknowledging this ongoing and reproducing geographical logic of capitalism, it is curious then that some would call the entire idea of 'neoliberalism' into question. I am thinking in particular of Weller and O'Neill's (2014) 'argument with neoliberalism' and Noel Castree's (2006, compare Castree 1999) and Clive Barnett's (2005) earlier laments about the (f)utility of the term and the limitations of a political economy approach to understanding our current situation.

Academic trends are a curious phenomenon. There are ebbs and flows to scholarly attention as individual researchers hedge their bets on what will be in vogue tomorrow, lest we be accused of treading water. I have no misgivings for such ongoing movements in our collective intellectual musings, as it is a process of vital importance. The practice of changing paradigms moves our theorisations forward to enable the exploration of new philosophical vistas, and as the world continues to turn, empirical contexts are never content to sit still while we retreat to the halls of the academy to write about what's going on. By the time we have formulated an opinion, written those ideas into an article, jumped through the hoops of peer review, corrected proofs and finally seen our hard work come to fruition in the form of a published article or book, the world we were writing about has radically changed and our analyses are always and inevitably a case of 'too little, too late'. On a personal level, I also write from a radical perspective, which means I have an innate distaste for orthodoxy. When certain ideas become too entrenched within the academy I relish the opportunity to find cracks in the façade of invincibility. Yet granted all of this, I still find the denial of neoliberalism a very peculiar endeavour. There remains a critical purchase to the theorisation of neoliberalism and its application to empirical contexts, wherein despite a very important need for critique, what is also required, is a continuing sense of watchfulness for the ongoing power and influence of neoliberalism in our world. Weller and O'Neill's (2014) argument thus represents the latest salvo in what has become something of a genre in its own right, a process of denial within human geography that began with Barnett's (2005) 'there's no such thing', continued with Castree's (2006) 'necessary illusions', and that has taken on a new character with Birch's (2014) 'we've never been'. 'The thing about denial' Georgina Kleege (quoted in Kudlick 2011: np) argues, 'is that it doesn't feel like denial when it's going on'.

BETWEEN NECESSARY ILLUSIONS AND VIOLENT IMAGINARIES

I do appreciate the concern that neoliberalism has become such a pervasive academic buzzword as to lend it the appearance of monolithic (the very critique that Gibson-Graham [1996] articulates with respect to capitalism), and accordingly I welcome the recognition of multiplicity, complexity, and variegation found in recent accounts such as Brenner and Theodore (2002) and Peck (2001). I am equally concerned by the emerging claims (see Farrands 2002) that the Left must seek to replicate the Right in articulating an alternative to neoliberalism that mirrors its breadth and scope of think tank networks and institutional connections (Carroll and Carson 2006; Plehwe and Walpen 2006; Weller and Singleton 2006). Indeed, such a totalising vision is a detrimental recapitulation that brings us no closer to the notion of human 'emancipation' than we are today. Following Mitchell (2002), we should rightly question why 'experts' should remake the world rather than the collective world remaking itself on its own terms. Nonetheless, Barnett's (2005) critique that 'there is no such thing as neoliberalism', a claim Castree (2006) approaches from a critical realist perspective in deeming neoliberalism a 'necessary illusion', are both potentially wanton in the face of the prevalence of poverty and inequality, and the resultant violence that such divisions of wealth, status and power so often entail. Castree no doubt remains committed to a Marxism of ensembles, where 'neoliberalism' is replaced by a set of connected and differential neoliberalisations. He also recognises full well that there are very real effects to come to terms with. Part of me fears that he leaves the question of 'where do we go from here' dangerously wide open, and yet another part of me wants to get on board and recognise that such openness enables possibilities. Barnett is less apologetic, contending 'neoliberalism's' ascription as a singular 'hegemonic' project reduces our understandings of social relations to that of residual effects by disregarding the proactive role sociocultural processes play in changing policy, regulations and governance modes. The contrasting reality, Barnett avers, is that market liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation have actually been impelled from the bottom-up, primarily via the populist ethos of left-leaning citizens' movements seeking greater autonomy, equality and participation. This critique certainly has a great deal of relevance to many settings within the Global North, but in making this argument, other than to question academics' alliances with various actors 'out there', Barnett completely ignores the Global South where such reforms have largely been foisted from the top-down through the coercive auspices of aid conditionality, International Financial Institution lending practices and occasionally even overt militarism as was seen in Iraq. Likewise, he fails to consider the resultant violent outcomes these impositions frequently have (Uvin 1999; 2003).

While it may be true in some specific instances that 'academic critics are made to feel important if the object of their animus appears to be hegemonic, global, and powerful: something that demands urgent critical scrutiny. It is far less glamorous and "sexy" to have constantly to describe ones objects of analysis as multiple, complex and varied through time and space' (Castree 2006: 5). Yet it could also be argued that the 'sexiest' position of all is that which seeks to secure a space and establish the framework for the next major 'post' in academia. I take up the question of 'postneoliberalism' in more detail later in this book, but for now I want to question the potentially unreflective allure such a new position might have among scholars. My sense is that a 'postneoliberalism' sentiment reveals more about the sociology of contemporary academia and its constant appeal to novelty than it does about the world outside. Nonetheless, while Castree's (2006) commentary is aimed at pale imitations of neoliberalisation arguments by raising questions about how case study research is operationalised and envisaged using a neoliberalism-as-monolithism interpretation (see also Castree 2005), I suspect these subtleties may be lost on many observers. Thus, the point I want to make is that should an injudicious 'postneoliberalism' position pick up steam among leftist scholars, this may be at the expense of giving those on the academic Right even more room to maneuver as they continue to define their own terms of reference in linear and modally uncomplicated ways. This is not to say that the Left should follow suit in such oversimplification. However, if leftist scholars are content to ruminate endlessly about slight differences in definition, scalar applicability and the usefulness of a 'both/and' agenda vis-à-vis neoliberalism without ever getting around to the vital work of thinking about how we might link 'local' expressions of violence to a bigger conversation concerning impoverishment and socioeconomic disparity, a discussion which Castree (2006: 6) quite surprisingly informs us is only 'apparently important',[1] I worry that the Left's position in academia will wane even further than it already has in recent years. By relationally connecting our 'local' accounts into 'larger' political discourses and economic strategies such as neoliberalism/neoliberalisation, scholars are offered a potential way forward in identifying and understanding the nonillusory 'local' and 'everyday' effects, which need to be explored more thoroughly, particularly as regards violence. In doing so we offer counter to the vengeful Orientalism of Huntington's (1996) The *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Kaplan's (2000) *The Coming Anarchy* and similar rightist treatises, which posit violence as little more than the aberrance of backward cultures while failing to consider how 'global' conditions often exacerbate the circumstances that give rise to 'local' expressions of violence. By omitting political and economic interests and contexts – however hybrid, variegated and amorphous they may be – when describing violence, and in presenting violence as exclusively a result of traits embedded in local cultures, such Orientalist imaginaries

feed into hegemonic stratagems that legitimise continuous (neo)colonial projects (Tuastad 2003). A sense of denial accordingly becomes a slippery slope.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE OF DENIAL

In arguing against neoliberalism Weller and O'Neill (2014) indicate that their 'starting point is language'. It is curious then that they didn't engage the discursive argument that surrounds neoliberalism and its ongoing perpetuation. Given the resonances of various interpretations of neoliberalism and the circuitous functioning of certain ideas that might be qualified as 'neoliberal', it seems an unusual oversight to not examine the potential discursive formations (see Springer 2010b). In particular, Weller and O'Neill (2014) are attentive to the various understandings of neoliberalism (hegemony, governmentality, policy and programme), which I similarly employ in my own discursive reading; yet they come to a very different conclusion than I do, arguing that these different understandings cannot be unified. The possibility of such a 'grand combination' is summarily dismissed as an 'Orwellian fiction' that would supposedly 'defy all we know about the presence of contestation and resistance in all social and material processes' (Weller and O'Neill 2014). Setting aside the fact that recent intelligence leaks have revealed the Orwellian *fact* of the contemporary moment (Springer et al. 2012), my account of neoliberalism as discourse demonstrates that different interpretations can actually be brought into productive conversation. So to the question of does *neoliberalism-in-general* even exist, I answer this question in chapter 2 with a 'yes', specifying that as with all discursive constructs, they are always and only understood as representations through their performative effects. To venture the response of 'no' is only possible if 'neoliberalism in general' is understood as a 'real word' referent, which I've argued it is not. Moreover, rejecting the notion of a 'real world' does not deny the material effects of neoliberalism. On the contrary, it instead recognises materialism in a sense whereby discourse and practice, or theory and event, become inseparable as of an 'archaeology of knowledge' (Foucault 2002).

Accordingly, when considered as a discursive formation, whereby the various understandings of neoliberalism are read as an ongoing reconstitution of a particular political rationality (Brown 2003), we are able to recognise neoliberalism as a general form that allows for both comparison and potential solidarities between various contexts. Far from being the antithesis of Weller and O'Neill's (2014) account, I actually see significant parallels insofar as neoliberalism as discourse is a type of 'global imaginary'. But if such an imaginary is a fabrication, and fabrication is something that is made, then in order to improve our struggles against neoliberalism we have to have a firm understanding of the ways in which

neoliberalism is made flesh, wherein the slippery character of the idea is properly accounted for since the recognition of neoliberalism as representation still necessitates social struggle. Building a wider understanding of solidarity through a 'larger conversation' quickens the demise of neoliberalism by replacing it with a new discourse, a new alternative narrative where egalitarianism becomes a greater possibility. The very process of contesting neoliberalism is a movement towards achieving this goal (Purcell 2008). Particular logics become entrenched through discourse, but there is no guarantee for even the most powerful ideas (Foucault 1990), as time and space are always unfolding and what *is* soon becomes what *was*. Thus, we can recognise that although particular discourses may prevail to varying degrees across different geographical contexts, there remains an ever-present potential for meanings to shift and for subaltern discourses to disrupt the existing orthodoxy.

Although providing qualification to their usage, I'm further unsettled by Weller and O'Neill's (2014) use of the label 'developmental state' as a stand-in for 'neoliberalism' in describing the situation in Australia. Not because I think this is an inappropriate description, and certainly they make a strong case for how this label actually fits. Rather, I'm troubled by the lack of reflexivity for how this categorisation, which is forever associated with the Southeast Asian context, may actually accommodate neoliberalism (Park, Child Hill and Saito 2011; Springer 2009). I don't think Weller and O'Neill have spent enough time considering the resonances that might conceivably be drawn out between 'developmental' and 'neoliberal' states, and instead it seems that they are content to employ a very odd strategy: they stretch the boundaries of one political economic descriptor to contest the stretched boundaries of another political economic descriptor. Of course political economic contexts are never 'hard and fast', 'this or that' scenarios, but rather they always express a shifting 'both/and' quality that can never be fully known or pinned down. To suggest otherwise is to invoke the theoretical crutch of an Archimedean point, as though one could ever attain an objective or omniscient perspective on the entire goings-on in any given society (Springer 2014). Thus we can demonstrate or refute any manner of characterisation, picking and choosing our examples carefully. This critique works both ways. The main point though, which is entirely overlooked by Weller and O'Neill, is that neoliberalism remains a 'radical political slogan' (Peck 2004: 403), and when we engage this idea as locus of solidarity with the potential to highlight a connection between various struggles against capitalism, we retain the critical promise that our theory and scholarship affords. Although hybridised and variegated under neoliberalism, capitalism remains always and everywhere a callous beast. Thus, in seeking to illuminate how processes of neoliberalisation and violence coalesce, 'we open our geographical imaginations to the possibility of (re)producing space in

ways that make possible a transformative and emancipatory politics' (Springer 2012: 141) that breaks with neoliberalism.

Despite the potential insights to be gained, the nature of Weller and O'Neill's (2014) critique leads me to believe that the link between 'developmental' and 'neoliberal' ideas would be dismissed. They support their general argument by suggesting that, 'there is a blurring of the boundaries between neoliberal and non-neoliberal reforms, enabling non-neoliberal practices to be rolled into the neoliberal story or else relegated to an incidental category'. But again, this criticism seems at odds with the contemporary geographical literature, where for example, when I write about 'articulated neoliberalism' in Cambodia (Springer 2011), the existing cultural-political-economic matrix is not seen as superfluous. Instead, I argue that by 'theorising neoliberalisation as an articulated, processual, hybridised, protean, variegated, promiscuous, and travelling phenomenon . . . the particularity of the Cambodian context suggests that the four-way relationship between neoliberalism, violence, kleptocracy, and patronage is necessarily imbued with characteristics that are unique to this given' (Springer 2011: 2567). I fail to see how this is any less 'inquisitive' than the position being advanced by Weller and O'Neill. My argument is not intended as a plenary, trans-geohistorical account wherein the substantive effects of neoliberalism are rendered as everywhere and always the same, but rather it attempts to locate neoliberalism within a particular context as but one component to the unfolding of a complex political economic story. By the same token, however, I would agree that accounts like Nick Lewis's (2009) 'progressive spaces of neoliberalism' do not implicitly allow for enough space for alternative futures to materialise. In contrast, White and Williams (2012) have demonstrated how alternative social practices that break with neoliberalism can be found in the mundanity of the everyday. At the same time, I don't think that simply not talking about neoliberalism will make it go away as Gibson-Graham (1996) argue. What is needed then is a high degree of reflexivity for the ways in which our projects may be subsumed by or break from neoliberalism, and recognition for the idea that this is never a 'cut and dry' process, but one that involves multiple slippages back and forth. This unfolding demands attention and sustained vigilance, where suggesting that neoliberalism is a 'necessary illusion' (Castree 2006) or that 'there is no such thing' (Barnett 2005) risks blinding ourselves to the contemporary realities of structural violence and the substantive abuse that neoliberalism unleashes (Springer 2012).

GOVERNMENTALITY AS PLOY OR DENIAL AS PARODY?

By including a grounded political economy perspective within a broader discursive understanding of neoliberalism we are able to acknowledge

inequality and poverty. This becomes possible by virtue of political economy approaches' recognition for the uneven geography (Harvey 2003; 2005) and originary violences of property that any capitalist system entails (Blomley 2000; 2003). In particular, both Marxist and anarchist perspectives draw our attention to the defining feature of capitalism as a mode of production occurring through an exchange between workers and capitalists: the valorisation of capital by commodified labour (Colas 2003; McKay 2011). Colas (2003) recognises how this exceptional achievement of capitalism was effected historically through the forceful and violent dispossession of direct producers from their means of subsistence, a process that Marx called 'primitive' or 'original' accumulation. However, because this is actually an ongoing process of capitalism, Harvey (2003) instead refers to this as 'accumulation as dispossession', which in concert with the commodification and privatisation of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant population, also includes:

> The conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc.) into exclusive property rights . . . suppression of rights to the commons; commodification of labour power and the suppression of alternative (indigenous) forms of production and consumption; colonial, neocolonial, and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources); monetization of exchange and taxation, particularly of land; the slave trade (which continues particularly in the sex industry); and usury, the national debt and, most devastating of all, the use of the credit system as a radical means of accumulation by dispossession. (Harvey 2005: 159)

In concert with capitalist accumulation by dispossession, the picture of inequality and poverty becomes even clearer when we recognise the concomitant imperative of the capitalist to pay wages that are as low as possible to his or her employees to maximise his or her own profits (Dunford 2000). The search for profits entails an obvious spatial (increasingly international) aspect, which accounts for the imperialist features of the leading capitalist countries, and their rivalry and domination over the periphery (Duménil and Lévy 2004). This highlights the centrality of the law of uneven development (Harvey 2003; 2005) so that imperialist expansion and monopolistic developments breathe new life into the capital system, thus temporally diffusing the time of its saturation. In ensuring higher profit margins, Palan (2000: 12) suggests the ideal of global market equilibrium is delayed and 'sabotaged', and through this observation he suggests that a Marxian approach places issues of hierarchy and power front and centre in the analysis of the world economy, by incorporating 'into the core of its theoretical edifice precisely those elements that economics treats as "exogenous" or contingent' thus merging the political to the economic, hence political-economy. Of course anarchists have long been doing much the same (Kropotkin 1912/1994; Proudhon 1890/1970),

even if an appreciation of their work has been largely ignored in contemporary geographical scholarship (Springer 2016). The point here though is that the current 'sabotage' to ensure greater accumulation and higher profits is at odds with the notion of development that posits 'a rising tide raises all boats', the supposed imperative behind neoliberalism.

Indeed, David Harvey (2005) avers that the primary substantive achievement of neoliberalisation has been the ability to distribute, rather than to generate, wealth and income, or the very continuation of accumulation by dispossession. His scepticism in this regard has led him to view neoliberalism as a project driven primarily by transnational elites, who are fundamentally concerned with the reconstitution of class power where it exists, and its creation where such class power is currently absent. This is a view increasingly shared by a number of critical scholars (see Berger 2006; Carrol and Carson 2006; Cox 2002; Duménil and Lévy 2004; McMichael 2000; Overbeek 2000; Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer 2006; Rapley 2004; Sparke 2004; Watson 2002). In comparison, as we have seen, a host of other scholars view neoliberalism as a practice of the elite, but place it closer to Foucauldian notions of governmentality (Amoore and Langley 2002; Ball and Olmedo 2013; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Fletcher 2010; Hamann 2009; Joseph 2013; Lemke 2002; Mitchell 2006). Such expository potential is patronisingly dismissed by Barnett (2005), who contends neoliberalism-as-governmentality is a denigratory language that treats individualism as an ideological ploy by the Right, inviting us to take consolation in a perception of collective decision-making as a normatively straightforward process. Of course in making the same sort of caricatural sweeps of leftist scholars that he argues those very scholars are guilty of with respect to neoliberalism, Barnett (2005) never gives pause to consider how democratic procedures are indeed problematised by the Left, yet still seen as preferable to the dictates of a class-based elite minority. In defending his position on neoliberalism as (re)constructed class power, Harvey (2005) points to the importunate rise in social inequality under neoliberalism, which he regards as structural to the entire project of neoliberalism, a claim that is given a significant amount of credibility with Wade's (2004) quantitative analysis and criticisms of global statistics.

Furthermore, if conditions among the lower classes deteriorate under neoliberalism, this failure is implied to be a product of personal irresponsibility or cultural inferiority (Harvey 2005), an argument epitomised by Harrison and Huntington's (2000) rightist call to arms *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*. More subtly, neoliberal ideology's suspicion of the poor as morally suspect turns the social suffering wrought by neoliberal capitalism into a 'public secret' (Taussig 1992; see also Watts 2000), allowing 'symbolic violence' – or that violence which accomplishes itself through misrecognition thus enabling violence to go unperceived as such – to prevail (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2004). Consequently

it is the poor who are blamed, and indeed come to blame themselves for their ongoing poverty (Bourgois 2004), an argument I take up in greater detail in chapter 5. For now though it is fair to say that accumulation by dispossession operates in much the same capacity insofar as the erasure of the originary and ongoing 'violences of property' (Blomley 2003) serves to legitimise the exclusionary claims of the landowning elite. The property system entails violent 'acts' of dispossession at its founding moment, as well as enduring violent 'deeds' – which need not be physicalised to be operative, as self-policing becomes reflexive – that (re)enforce the exclusionary basis of private property (Blomley 2000). Working in concert, these 'acts' and 'deeds' purposefully disregard the violence to which the poor have been subjected, while resistance and subsequent attempts at reclamation are typically treated as both proscribed and manifestly violent. It is in this way that these decidedly non-illusory effects of neoliberalisation can be seen as deliberately 'choking the south' (Wade 2006) or 'attacking the poor' (Cammack 2002), where we can view Polanyi's contention that the dominance of market rationality was a fundamental cause of the savagery characteristic of the first half of the twentieth century (Dunford 2000) as being carried forward into a new context. Again, while neoliberalism is discursive, it is also very much material in terms of its outcomes and implications.

Neoliberals are quick to point out how absolute poverty has declined under the global neoliberal regime, a claim that may or may not actually be tenable (Wade 2004). Regardless of this assertion, following John Rapley (2004) we can view the global neoliberal regime as inherently unstable because it assumes that absolute rather than relative prosperity is the key to contentment, and while absolute poverty may have declined under neoliberalism, relative inequality has risen (Uvin 2003). Building on this notion, Rapley (2004) suggests the events of 11 September 2001 were a symbolic moment of crisis, where those on the 'losing end' of the neoliberal regime's unequal distribution made their discontent with systemic poverty and glaring inequality emphatically clear (see also Tetreault [2003] and Uvin [1999], who suggest similar expressions of resentment ultimately led to the Rwandan genocide). The response in the wake of this tragedy has been escalated violence under the auspice of what Harvey (2003) referred to as the 'New Imperialism' led by the Bush administration and continued under Obama. Contra Larner's (2003) claim that this renewed showing of military might is anything but neoliberal in character, the ongoing rhetorical 'war on terror' uses militarism to enforce the neoliberal order most overtly in those spaces where the geostrategic imperative for oil converge with the failure of Wall Street-Treasury-IMF complex economic prescriptions (Wade 1998), namely in Afghanistan and Iraq (Gregory 2004; Harvey 2003), with new theatres extending into Syria and Pakistan largely through the use of drone strikes. US military power thus serves as a bulwark for enforcement of an American

concept of 'new world order' (i.e., neoliberalism-cum-Pax Americana) which as a renewed strategy of accumulation by dispossession is shared to varying degrees by other governments, particularly members of the G8 (Cox 2002).

The precedent set by the New Imperialism has seen many states across the Global South, informed by the rhetoric of their own war on terror, using violence more readily as a tool of control (Canterbury 2005). While such repression is not entirely new, as Glassman and Samatar (1997) point to it as a commonplace feature of the 'post'-colonial era, novelty rests in the ease of its legitimation via the discourse of 'security'. Indeed, such neoauthoritarianism is readily extended under neoliberalism as both a means to maintain the social order necessary for the extraction of economic surplus from those countries recently incorporated into the global capitalist system (Canterbury 2005), and as a response to the supposedly inherently violent tendencies of the lower classes, who now faced with mounting unemployment, slashed wages, forced evictions and all the other associated hallmarks of accumulation by dispossession, must resort to other means of survival, being ultimately forced into the underground economy as a street vendor, or worse, prostitution and drug trafficking. Thus, the neoliberal imperative for the inalienable right of the individual and his or her property, trumps any social democratic concern for the open public space, equality and social solidarity (Harvey 2005). Yet one is left to wonder whether Barnett (2005) would extend his argument to consider such attempts at collective empowerment and redistribution as mere ideological ploys by the Left, inviting us to take solace in an image of individualism as practically and normatively unproblematic? The parody here should be apparent.

CARICATURE IN PARADIGMATIC RELIEF

By now it should be clear that Weller and O'Neill's (2014) critique of *neoliberalism-in-theory* is actually nothing new under the sun. While I'm comfortable seeing another argument that challenges the reductionist view of neoliberalism, the authors are somewhat misleading in that they position their argument as being one that cuts against other contemporary scholars working on these issues. The critique of *neoliberalism-in-general* is likewise late to the party. For all the ideological purity of free market rhetoric, and for all the seemingly pragmatic logic of neoclassical economics, 'the practice of neoliberal statecraft is inescapably, and profoundly, marked by compromise, calculation and contradiction. There is no blueprint. There is not even a map' (Peck 2010: 106). While the underlying assumptions of neoliberalism and its naturalisation of market relations remain in place outside of the geographical literature, in its 'actually existing' circumstances neoliberalism has been recognised by geogra-

phers as varying greatly in terms of its dosages among regions, states and cities (Brenner and Theodore 2002). Thus, far from a fait accompli, neoliberalism is considered a 'rascal concept' (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010). Its ongoing implementation in various sites is characterised by struggle, contradiction and compromise, making the very idea of neoliberalism as a paradigmatic construct untenable. In light of these understandings, I'm left with a sense of ambivalence for Weller and O'Neill's argument. Neoliberalism has a capacity to permeate other tendencies, but never as a complete project of total replacement. There is no 'pure' anything, but admitting to this is not the same as saying that something does not exist. In thinking about my own composition as an individual, I have multiple roles and complex nuances to my identity, but even if this could be boiled down into an ostensible purity called 'Simon Springer', the symbiotic bacteria in my stomach might want to disagree. The point is, we are all aggregations and everything in this world is an assemblage. Such is the nature of space-time and the differentiation from singularity that the universe has enabled. Applying this notion to political economics is no different, and thus it includes how we should conceptualise neoliberalism. For me it is much more productive to look at the discourses that surround the idea than it is to focus in on reducing the concept of neoliberalism to a neat or fixed definition.

Weller and O'Neill (2014) are correct to suggest, 'no particular place quite matches up to the ideal-typical model', yet their use of Barnett's (2005) account of neoliberalism to support this idea is extremely problematic. If Weller and O'Neill buy into this 'neoliberalism in denial' argument, I wonder if they have considered that the same could be said for any concept, including their notion of a 'developmental state'? I have no problem with the argument that within Australia neoliberal ideas have been 'contested and discarded more often than they have been modified or reproduced' (Weller and O'Neill 2014), but who would actually argue with this? At this point, such an argument is to be expected, particularly by geographers, as the primary concern is for understanding the expansions, variegations and formations of neoliberalism, not for identifying an ostensible archetype. Weller and O'Neill (2014) express further concern for the ways in which everything might be presumed as neoliberal in character, rather than appreciating emerging contradictions, counter tendencies and breaks with neoliberalism as there 'seems no limit to the practices that could be included'. Again, I have no criticism to make, as I have similarly argued that there is no limit to our potential organisation beyond capitalism (Springer 2012; 2016). Yet by invoking Barnett (2005), and in employing Castree's (2006) disapproving account of neoliberalism as summoning a 'bigger and apparently important conversation', Weller and O'Neill (2014) assume that scholars ask 'little questions that seek to embellish a received discourse rather than big questions that probe its foundations, and to ignore the effects of spatially differentiated contexts

and contingencies'. This would be a great critique if it were actually a true assessment of contemporary scholarship on neoliberalism, and particularly the work being done by geographers.

Beyond geography reductionist ideas about neoliberalism persist, and I can see them in some of the problematic readings of neoliberalism in Cambodia (Hughes 2009; Thavat 2010), which work against the more nuanced understandings that I've attempted to foster in my own work (Springer 2010; 2011). Yet among geographers we would need to look to the 1990s and very early 2000s to see this sort of undifferentiated argument. Today we have a much more sophisticated understanding of how neoliberalism actually works, which unfortunately means that, despite being cognisant of not wanting to be accused of constructing a straw person argument, I can't help but read Weller and O'Neill's (2014) account as such. Of course it is important to recognise that not everything is an aspect of neoliberalism. But who would actually deny this knowing what we know now? In geography it has been over a decade now since neoliberalism was considered a 'summary word that elides a complex reality and dissuades close political engagement . . . where the instinct for a closer analysis is suppressed' (Weller and O'Neill 2014). Peck and Tickell's (2002) 'Neoliberalizing space' nipped this in the bud long ago, and what Weller and O'Neill (2014) really seem to be critiquing is the grossly essentialist view of neoliberalism held by the mainstream media and general public, not the nuanced interpretation that is presently being advanced within the academy. Consequently I'm left to wonder if this is actually a case of Australian scholars being slow to respond to geographical readings of neoliberalism vis-à-vis their interpretations of the empirical realities in the country. If so, perhaps this actually says something about the stature of geographical scholarship within the Australian context more than anything else, which paradoxically may have something to do with the neoliberal character of an academic system that actively undermines intellectual work (Davies 2005; Dowling 2008).

CONCLUSION

Neoliberalism lacks purity. As a discursive construct we should expect this. There will always and inevitably be evidence to the contrary. This is the present starting point of contemporary geographical thought on neoliberalism, and yet Weller and O'Neill (2014) curiously take us back in time to a version of neoliberalism that no longer resonates with the cutting edge of scholarship in human geography. They appeal to an idea of neoliberalism being treated as a supposed 'inevitability', and yet it isn't clear who is actually using this sort of discursive framing other than proponents of neoliberalism. The geographical literature has been intensively critical of this idea for a very long time, and while I fully appreciate

the epistemic challenge being offered here, it really isn't a very unique line of inquiry. Weller and O'Neill's (2014) contention that their own appraisal is somehow 'more inquisitive' is, in the final analysis, pretty thinly argued, and the notion that they 'deliberately invert the expectation that all substantial political-economic changes are an expression of a variegated global neoliberal hegemon' is unfortunately a caricature of the current literature in human geography. No serious geographer in 2014, the year the article was published, was arguing anything of the sort. Even if this were actually the case, simply because certain authors have overlooked or downplayed evidence that contradicts a neoliberalisation thesis doesn't mean we should abandon the idea altogether. Shouldn't we instead appeal to the more sophisticated understanding of neoliberalism that insists on hybridity and variegation, as is currently the focus on human geography and beyond? If we attune our analysis to what I have elsewhere called an 'articulation agenda' (Springer 2011), we are able to see quite clearly where the fissures are, so that our analyses of neoliberalism may chisel out wider cracks wherein social movements may eventually tear down the walls and offer alternative pathways.

Finally, in suggesting that neoliberalism is a 'necessary illusion' or that 'there is no such thing' as Castree (2006) and Barnett (2005) respectively do, albeit from two very different theoretical perspectives, is to run the perilous risk of obviating ourselves from the contemporary reality of structural violence (Bourgois 2001; Farmer 2004; Uvin 2003). Without theorising capital as a class project and neoliberalism as an 'actually existing' circumstance (Brenner and Theodore 2002), structural violence, and the associated, if not often resultant direct violence (Galtung 1990), becomes something 'out there' and far away in either spatial proximity or class distance, so that it is unusual, unfamiliar and unknown to the point of obscurity. Arming ourselves with a discourse approach, and a theoretical toolkit that includes governmentality and political economic readings of neoliberalism, allows us to bring global capitalism's geographies of violence into sharp focus. It alerts us to the realities of poverty and inequality as largely outcomes of an uneven capitalist geography, and furthermore enables us to recognise the ways in which the 'out there' of violence has occurred and continues to proliferate and be (re)produced in a plentitude of spaces, including 'in here'. It is only through recognition of such symbolic violence that human emancipation may be offered, and without such acknowledgement, what's left? Even if we are only being 'lightly touched' (Weller and O'Neill 2014) by neoliberalism, this is still a grotesque molestation. Silence has never been a solution for the abused, and so we need to continue to sound the alarm.

NOTE

1. Castree's (2006: 6) full statement reads: 'The habit of naming and evaluating the unnamable – the grand phenomenon that is supposedly expressed through diverse spatiotemporal particulars – dies hard. This is why I suspect "neoliberalism" will remain a necessary illusion for those on the geographical Left: something we know does not exist as such, but the idea of whose existence allows our "local" research finding[s] to connect to a much bigger and apparently important conversation'.

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FIVE
Of Violence and Victims

The idea that violence might be integral to cultural practice is difficult to accept. In concert with the abuse that the concept of culture has been subjected to as of late, where in keeping with geopolitical hegemony (see Harrison and Huntington 2000), or perhaps more surprisingly in an attempt to argue against such hegemonic might (see Roberts 2001), some cultures, particularly 'Asian', 'African' or 'Islamic' cultures, are conferred with a supposedly inherent predilection towards violence. Yet the relationship between culture and violence is also axiomatic, since violence is part of human activity. Thus, it is not the call for violence to be understood as a social process informed by culture that is problematic; rather, it is the potential to colonise this observation with imaginative geographies that distort it in such a fashion that deliberately or inadvertently enable particular geostrategic aims to gain validity. The principal method of distortion is Orientalism, which as 'a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts', is 'an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction' but a whole series of 'interests' which create, maintain and have the intention to understand, control, manipulate and incorporate that which is manifestly different through a discourse that is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power: political, intellectual, cultural and moral (Said 2003: 12). At base, Orientalism is a form of paranoia that feeds on cartographies of fear by producing 'our' world negatively through the construction of a perverse 'Other'. This is precisely the discourse colonialism mobilised to construct its exploitative authority in the past. In the current context, a relatively new geostrategic aim appeals to the same discursive principles for valorisation in its quest to impose an econometric version of global sovereignty (Hart 2006; Pieterse 2004; Sparke 2004). Neoliberalism is on the move, and in the context

of the Global South, Orientalism is its latitude inasmuch as it provides neoliberalism with a powerful discursive space to manoeuvre.

This chapter has two interrelated central aims. First, building on the work of Arturo Escobar (2001) and Doreen Massey (2005), I contribute to retheorisations of place as a relational assemblage, rather than as an isolated container, by calling into question the relationship between place and violence. Second, informed by an understanding of Orientalism as performative (Said 2003), and power/knowledge as productive (Foucault 1977), I set out to challenge how neoliberalism discursively assigns violence to particular peoples and cultures through its employment of the problematic notions of place that I dispute. I argue that Orientalism maintains an underlying assumption that violence sits in places, and as an affect and effect of discourse, this Orientalist view is enabled because the production of space and place is largely a discursive enterprise (Bachelard 1964; Lefebvre 1991). But while violence can bind itself to our somatic geographies and lived experiences of place, in the same way that culture is not confined to any particular place, so too do violent geographies stretch inwards and outwards to reveal the inherent dynamism of space as multiple sites are repeatedly entwined by violence. Thus, following Michel Foucault's (1977; 1980) insights on power, I am not interested in the why of violence, but rather the how and where of violence, and particularly its relationship to neoliberalism. A culturally sensitive critical political economy approach alerts us to the power/knowledge-geometries at play (Hart 2002; Peet 2000; Sayer 2001), so that while violence is clearly mediated through and informed by local cultural norms, it is equally enmeshed in the logic of globalised capital.

In the setting of the Global South, where and upon which the Global North's caricatural vision of violence repeatedly turns, authoritarian leaders may appropriate neoliberal concerns for market security as a rationale for their violent and repressive actions (Canterbury 2005; Springer 2010). At the same time, because of the performative nature of Orientalism, an exasperated populace may follow their 'scripted' roles and resort to violent means in their attempts to cope with the festering poverty and mounting inequality wrought by their state's deepening neoliberalisation (Uvin 2003). Far from being a symptom of an innate cultural proclivity for violence, state-sponsored violence and systemic social strife can be seen as outcomes of both a state made 'differently powerful' via the ongoing 'roll-out' of neoliberal reforms (Peck 2001: 447), and the discourses that support this process (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001; Springer 2015). Thus, when applied to the context of 'the Other', neoliberalism maintains – in the double sense of both incessant reproduction and the construction of alterity – a 'Self'-perpetuating logic. Through the circulation of a discourse that posits violence as an exclusive cultural preserve, and by inextricably linking itself to democracy, neoliberalism discursively represents itself as the harbinger of rationality and the only guarantor of

peace. Yet neoliberalism's structural effects of poverty and inequality often (re)produce violence (Escobar 2004), and as such, neoliberalism perpetually renews its own licence by suggesting it will cure that which neoliberalisation causes to ail.

While writing about violence directly in empirical terms is a worthwhile endeavour to be sure, it is one that – without significant attention and attachment to social theory – risks lending itself to problematic and even Orientalist readings of place. Thus, the purpose here is to critique the limitations of a placed-based approach to violence that merely catalogues in situ, rather than appropriately recognising the relational geographies of both violence and place. Accordingly, I do not offer empirical accounts of particular places, as my intention is to call such particularised interpretations of 'place' into question. While violence sits in places in terms of the way in which we perceive its manifestation as a localised and embodied experience, this very idea is challenged when place is reconsidered as a relational assemblage. This retheorisation opens up the supposed fixity, separation and immutability of place to recognise it instead as always coconstituted by, mediated through and integrated within the wider experiences of space. Such a radical rethinking of place fundamentally transforms the way we understand violence. No longer confined to its material expression as an isolated 'event' or localised 'thing', violence can more appropriately be understood as an unfolding process, arising from the broader geographical phenomena and temporal patterns of the social world, and particularly the ongoing experiences of neoliberalisation. In short, through such a reinterpretation of place, we are much better positioned to dismiss Orientalist accounts that bind violence to particular peoples, cultures and places, as was the mandate of colonial geography. We can instead initiate a more emancipatory geography that challenges such colonial imaginings by questioning how seemingly local expressions of violence are instead always imbricated within wider sociospatial and political economic patterns. This allows for a more theoretical understanding of how ongoing (neo)colonial frameworks, like neoliberalism, are woven between, within, and across places in ways that facilitate and (re)produce violence.

Following this introduction, I begin by establishing why an exploration of the discursive contours of Orientalism, neoliberalism and violence, and their intersections with space and place necessitates a theoretical analysis. I argue that the confounding experience of violence makes it a difficult phenomenon to write about using a direct empirical prose. This does not negate that there are instances where we should attempt to do so, as I have done in my other work (see Springer 2009; 2010; 2015), but the purpose of this chapter is to focus explicitly on theory so that a more critical approach to understanding the relationship between violence, place and neoliberalism might be devised. The following section draws on Massey's (2005) reconceptualisation of space and place to argue

that, although violence is experienced through the ontological priority of place, these experiences are inseparable from the relational characteristic of space as a unitary and indivisible whole. This renders accounts of violence as the exclusive preserve of particular cultures untenable, a point that is expanded upon in the next section where I argue that all violence is rational because of the cultural meaning it evokes. The notion that violence is ever 'irrational' is an ascription applied to individuals and cultures in an attempt to mark them as 'Other', which is effected through the invocation of very specific kinds of imaginative geographies. The section that follows shifts the focus directly onto neoliberalism and its relationship with Orientalism. Here I build on chapter 3's contention that neoliberalism came to prominence out of a concern for violence in the wake of the two world wars, and based on its call for a return to the principles of the Enlightenment, neoliberalism was able to construct itself as the sole providence of nonviolence and the lone bearer of 'reason' and 'civilisation' in our world. Before concluding, I tease out some of the spatial and temporal fallacies underscoring neoliberalism and its intersections with Orientalism. In particular, I examine how the discursive fictions of neoliberalism position it as a 'divine' salvation to 'backwards' peoples, thereby obscuring both the structural and 'mythic' violence that neoliberalism is premised upon. The conclusion reminds readers that despite their relationship, Orientalism and neoliberalism do not presuppose each other. However, because neoliberalism can be understood as a contemporary incarnation of 'empire' (Hardt and Negri 2000; Hart 2006; Pieterse 2004; Sparke 2005), and since Orientalism is at base an imperial endeavour (Gregory 2004a; Said 1993), recognising their convergence is vital to conceiving an emancipatory politics of refusal. My overarching concern in this chapter is for the ways that neoliberal ideology employs Orientalist discourses to tie violence to specific cultures and particular places. Thus, I conclude by proposing that, while the interactions of violence with space and place are of course material, they are also very much imaginative. Out of this understanding, I suggest that perhaps peace is, as the late John Lennon once intuitively sang, something we must imagine.

POETRY AFTER AUSCHWITZ: THE PROBLEM OF REPRESENTING VIOLENCE

A perennial complication of discussions about human suffering is the awareness of cultural differences. In the wake of the damage wrought by Samuel Huntington (1993), some might contend that the concept of culture is beyond reclamation (Mitchell 1995), especially with respect to discussions of violence. There is, however, still a great deal of resonance to the concept that can, and perhaps must be salvaged if we are to ever

make sense of violence. If culture is defined as a historically transmitted form of symbolisation upon which a social order is constructed (Geertz 1973; Peet 2000), then understanding any act, violent or otherwise, is never achieved solely in terms of its physicality and invariably includes the meaning it is afforded by culture (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004). An account of the cultural dimensions of violence is perhaps even vital, as focusing exclusively on the physical aspects of violence transforms the project into a clinical or literary exercise, which runs the risk of degenerating into a 'pornography of violence' (Bourgois 2001) where voyeuristic impulses subvert the larger project of witnessing, critiquing and writing against violence. While violence in its most fundamental form entails pain, dismemberment and death, people do not engage in or avoid violence simply because of these tangible consequences, nor are these corporeal outcomes the reason why we attempt to write or talk about violence. Violence as a mere fact is largely meaningless. It takes on and gathers meaning because of its affective and cultural content, where violence is felt as meaningful (Nordstrom 2004).

'To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric', Theodor Adorno (1981: 34) once famously wrote. Confounded by the atrocities that had occurred under the Nazis, he failed to understand how a humanity capable of causing such catastrophic ruin could then relate such an unfathomable tale. Although struck by the emotional weight of violence, Adorno was wrong, as it is not poetry that is impossible after Auschwitz, but rather prose:

> Realistic prose fails, where the poetic evocation of the unbearable atmosphere of a camp succeeds. That is to say, when Adorno declares poetry impossible (or, rather, barbaric) after Auschwitz, this impossibility is an enabling impossibility: poetry is always 'about' something that cannot be addressed directly, only alluded to. (Zizek 2008: 4e5)

For victims, any retelling of violence is necessarily riddled with inconsistency and confusion. The inability to convey agony and humiliation with any sense of clarity is part of the trauma of a violent event. Indeed, 'physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned' (Scarry 1985: 4). As such, the chaotic bewilderment of experiencing violence makes understanding it an unusually mystifying endeavour. Thus, what can we say about violence without being overwhelmed by its unnerving horror and incapacitated by the fear it instils? How can we represent violence without becoming so removed from and apathetic towards its magnitude that we no longer feel a sense of anguish or distress? And in what ways can we raise the question of violence in relation to victims, perpetrators and even entire cultures, without reducing our accounts to caricature, where violence itself becomes the defining, quintessential fea-

ture of subjectivity? To quote Adorno (1981: 34) once more, 'Even the most extreme consciousness of doom threatens to degenerate into idle chatter'.

The confounding effects of violence ensure that it is a phenomena shot through with a certain perceptual blindness. In his monumental essay 'Critique of Violence', Walter Benjamin (1986) exposed our unremitting tendency to obscure violence in its institutionalised forms, and because of this opacity, our inclination to regard violence exclusively as something we can see through its direct expression. Yet the structural violence resulting from our political and economic systems (Farmer 2004; Galtung 1969), and the symbolic violence born of our discourses (Bourdieu 2001; Jiwani 2006), are something like the dark matter of physics, '[they] may be invisible, but [they have] to be taken into account if one is to make sense of what might otherwise seem to be "irrational" explosions of subjective [or direct] violence' (Zizek 2008: 2). These seemingly invisible geographies of violence – including the hidden fist of the market itself – have both 'nonillusory effects' and pathogenic affects in afflicting human bodies that create suffering (Farmer 2003), which can be seen if one cares to look critically enough. Yet, because of their sheer pervasiveness, systematisation and banality we are all too frequently blinded from seeing that which is perhaps most obvious. This itself marks an epistemological downward spiral, as 'the economic' in particular is evermore abstracted and its 'real world' implications are increasingly erased from collective consciousness (Hart 2008). 'The clearest available example of such epistemic violence', Gayatri Spivak (1988: 24–25) contends, 'is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other', and it is here that the relationship between Orientalism and neoliberalism is revealed.

Since Orientalism is a discourse that functions precisely due to its ability to conceal an underlying symbolic violence (Tuastad 2003), and because the structural violence of poverty and inequality that stems from the political economies of neoliberalism is cast as illusory, my reflections on neoliberalism, Orientalism and their resultant imaginative and material violent geographies are, as presented here, purposefully theoretical. As Derek Gregory (1993: 275) passionately argues, we 'have to work with social theory. Empiricism is not an option, if it ever was, because the "facts" do not (and never will) "speak for themselves", no matter how closely we listen'. Although the 'facts' of violence can be assembled, tallied and categorised, the cultural scope and emotional weight of violence can never be entirely captured through empirical analysis. After Auschwitz, and now after 9/11, casting a sideways glance at violence through the poetic abstractions of theory must be considered as an enabling possibility. This is particularly the case with respect to understanding the geographies of violence, as our understandings of space and place are also largely poetic (Bachelard 1964; Kong 2001).

IMAGINATIVE BINDINGS OF SPACE: GEOGRAPHY AND NARRATIVE

Despite the attention space and place receive in contemporary human geography, Massey (2005) has convincingly argued that there is a prevailing theoretical myopia concerning their conceptualisation. Space and place are typically thought to counterpose, as there exists an implicit imagination of different theoretical 'levels': space as the abstract versus the everydayness of place. Place, however, is not 'the Other' of space, it is not a pure construct of the local or a bounded realm of the particular in opposition to an overbearing, universal and absolute global space (Escobar 2001). What if, Massey (2005: 6) muses, we refuse this distinction, 'between place (as meaningful, lived and everyday) and space (as what? the outside? the abstract? the meaningless?)'. By enshrining space as universal, theorists have assumed that places are mere subdivisions of a ubiquitous and homogeneous space that is 'dissociated from the bodies that occupy it and from the particularities that these bodies len[d] to the places they inhabit' (Escobar 2001: 143). Such disregard is peculiar since it is not the absoluteness of space, but our inescapable immersion in place via embodied perception that is the ontological priority of our lived experience. Edward Casey (1996: 18) eloquently captures this notion in stating that, 'To live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the places one is in'. The inseparability of space and time entails a further recognition that places should be thought of as moments, where amalgamations of things, ideas and memories coalesce out of our embodied experiences and the physical environments in which they occur to form the contours of place. As such, Massey (2005) encourages us to view space as the simultaneity of stories-so-far, and place as collections of these stories, articulations within the wider power-geometries of space. The production of space and place is accordingly the unremitting and forever unfinished product of competing discourses over what constitutes them (Lefebvre 1991).

Violence is one of the most profound ongoing stories influencing the (re)production of space. Similarly, individual and embodied narratives of violence woven out of a more expansive spatial logic may become acute, forming constellations that delineate and associate place. Accordingly, it may be useful to begin to think about 'violent narratives', not simply as stories about violence, but rather as a spatial metaphor analogous to violent geographies and in direct reference to Massey's (2005) reconceptualisation of space and place. Allen Feldman (1991: 1) looks to bodily, spatial and violent practices as configuring a unified language of material signification, compelling him to 'treat the political subject, particularly the body, as the locus of manifold material practices.' To Feldman approaching violence from its site of effect and generation (agency) is to examine where it takes place, thereby embedding violence in the situated practices

of agents. Violence is bound up within the production of social space (Bourdieu 1989), and because, by virtue of spatiality, social space and somatic place continually predicate each other, the recognition of violence having a direct bearing on those bodies implies a geography of violence. Foucault (1980: 98) has argued that 'individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application', and this is precisely how power and violence depart, as individuals are at once both the vehicles of violence and its points of application. In the end, because the body is where all violence finds its influence – be it direct and thus obvious to the entangled actors, or structural and thus temporally and spatially diffused before reaching its final destination at and upon the embodied geographies of human beings – place is the site where violence is most visible and easily discerned. Yet violence is only one facet of the multiple, variegated and protean contours of place. So while violence bites down on our lived experiences by affixing itself to our everyday geographies and by colonising our bodies, violence itself, much like culture, is by no means restricted to place, nor is place static. Thus, the place-based dynamics of violence that seemingly make it possible to conceive a 'culture of violence' actually render this notion untenable precisely because of place's relationality and proteanism.

The embodied geographies of experience (including violence) that exist in places stretch their accounts out through other places, linking together a matrix of narratives in forming the mutable landscapes of human existence (Tilley 1994). This porosity of boundaries is essential to place, and it reveals how local specificities of culture are comprised by a complex interplay of internal constructions and external exchange. In the face of such permeability an enculturation of violence is certainly conceivable. All forms of violence are not produced by the frenzied depravity of savage or pathological minds, but are instead cultural performances whose poetics derive from the sociocultural histories and relational geographies of the locale (Whitehead 2004). Violence has a culturally informed logic, and it thereby follows that because culture sits in places (Basso 1996; Escobar 2001), so too does violence. Yet the grounds on which some insist on affixing and bounding violence so firmly to particular places in articulating a 'culture of violence' argument are inherently unstable.[1] The shifting, kaleidoscopic nature of space-time demonstrates the sheer impossibility of such attempts. So while it is important to highlight the emplacement of all cultural practices (including violence), whereby culture is carried into places by bodies engaged in practices that are at once both encultured and enculturing (Escobar 2001), it is only through a geographical imagination constructed on a parochial agenda, rooted in colonial modes of thought and dislocated from the dynamic material underpinnings of place that a culture itself can be caricatured as violent. In short, while violence forms a part of any given

culture, it is never the sole defining feature as neoliberal arguments seem to assume.

THE RATIONALITY OF VIOLENCE: POWER, KNOWLEDGE AND 'TRUTH'

That violence has meaning, albeit multiple, complex and often contradictory (Stanko 2003), infers that so too does it have a particular sense of rationality. Contra what we typically hear about violence in the media, sadly most violence is not 'senseless' at all (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004). According to Foucault (1996: 299) all human behaviour is scheduled and programmed through rationality, where violence is no exception:

> What is most dangerous in violence is its rationality. Of course violence itself is terrible. But the deepest root of violence and its permanence come out of the form of rationality we use. The idea had been that if we live in the world of reason, we can get rid of violence. This is quite wrong. Between violence and rationality there is no incompatibility.

Sanctioning certain acts of violence as 'rational', while condemning others as 'irrational' can be discerned as a primary instrument of power insofar as perceived rationality becomes misconstrued with legitimacy. Equally problematic is that such a dichotomy becomes a dividing line between 'civilisation' and 'barbarism', one that is given spatial licence through imaginative geographies (Said 2003). The power to represent and imagine geography and its subjects like this rather than like that, is thus at once both a process of articulation and valorisation (Gregory 2004b).

Drawing on Foucault's (1972) recognition that the exercise of power and the sanction of particular knowledges are coterminous, Edward Said (2003) identifies imaginative geographies as constructions that fuse distance and difference together through a series of spatialisations. They operate by demarcating conceptual partitions and enclosures between 'the same' and 'the Other', which configure 'our' space of the familiar as separate and distinct from 'their' unfamiliar space that lies beyond. Gregory (2004a) interprets this division – wherein 'they' are seen to lack the positive characteristics that distinguish 'us' – as forming the blackened foundations of the 'architectures of enmity'. Informed by Gregory's understandings, I use the descriptor 'virulent' to mean three things in qualifying particular imaginative geographies. First, I seek to emphasise those imaginative geographies that invoke a profound sense of hostility and malice, which may thereby produce tremendously harmful effects for those individuals cast within them. Second, through the simplicity of the essentialisms they render, some imaginative geographies may be

readily and uncritically accepted, thus making them highly infectious and easily communicable among individuals subjected to their distinct brand of 'common sense', and in this way they operate as symbolic violence.[2] Finally, the etymology of the Latin word for 'virulence' (*virulentus*) is derived from the word man (*vir*), and as related concept metaphors in contemporary English, 'virulence' and 'virility' are informed by masculinist modes of response and engagement. The cultural coding of places as sites of violence is thus imbricated in gendered ideas about mastery, colonial control and – drawing on the Orientalist 'mature west/juvenile east' trope – boyish resistance. Although a detailed inquiry into the various activations of Orientalist projections of violence onto groups of 'Oriental' males is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is imperative to recognise how virulent imaginative geographies employ a sense of 'virility' to code 'Oriental' males as pre-oedipal or feminine. Such discursive emasculation, which is itself a form of symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2001), renders 'Others' incapable of managing violence with 'patriarchal reason', and here again, neoliberal rationalism becomes the salve. In short, virulent imaginative geographies are those geographical imaginations that are premised upon and recapitulate extremely negative, racially derogatory and gender-laden pejorative assumptions, where the notion of a 'culture of violence' represents a paradigmatic case in point (see Springer 2009).

Through virulent imaginative geographies, the primary tonality 'they' are seen to lack is rationality, which is a claim to truth that is mounted through the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse (Foucault 1980) that declares irrationality as the sine qua non of 'their' cultures, and is in turn used to explain why 'they' are violent. Such allusions, sanctioned by the accretions of Orientalism, are performative. In a substantial sense, the categories, codes and conventions of Orientalism produce the effects that they name (Gregory 2004a). So if violence is said to be the 'truth' of a particular culture, and ipso facto the places in which that culture sits, then power decorates this truth by ensuring its ongoing recapitulation in the virulent imaginative geographies it has created. In a very real sense then, violent geographies are often (re)produced and sustained by a cruel and violent Orientalism.

Space is endowed with an imaginative or figurative value that we can name and feel, acquiring 'emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here' (Said 2003: 55). Places are accordingly transformed through fabrications where narratives inform us of meaning through the inflective topographies of desire, fantasy and anxiety (Gregory 1995). Thus, whether we recognise a place as 'home-like' or 'prison-like', a 'utopia' or a 'killing field', is dependent upon the stories-so-far to which we have participated in forming that place, but equally, and indeed wholly for places we have never visited, the imaginings that

have been circulated, rendered and internalised or rejected in forming our cartographic understandings. The experience, threat or fear of violence in a particular place is perhaps the single most influential factor in our pronouncements of space (Pain 1997), bringing a visceral and emotional charge to our ontological and epistemological interpretations. Likewise our attitudes towards particular geographies frequently fold back onto the people who comprise them. For example, if domestic violence is part of an individual's lived experience or resonant memory, that person's geographical imagination of her or his objective house (its corners, corridors, rooms) is transformed from a place of sanctuary, to a place of terror (see Meth 2003). It is the actors who live in and thereby (re)produce that place who have facilitated this poetic shift in meaning, and as such they are imbricated in the reformulated geographical imaginings.

Similarly, the fear of 'Other' spaces is not based on an abstract geometry. Rather, such apprehension is embedded in the meanings that have been attached to those spaces through a knowledge of 'the Other' that is premised on the bodies that draw breath there, and importantly, how those bodies fall outside a typical understanding of 'Self', or what Foucault (1978: 304) referred to as 'normalising power'. We are 'subjected to the production of truth through power, and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth' (Foucault 1980: 93), but the discourse of Orientalism claims that the truth about 'ourselves' is vastly different from the truth of 'the Other'. This knowledge is productive in the sense that 'it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth' (Foucault 1977: 194) concerning the supposed aberrance of 'the Other', and Orientalism functions to validate our anxieties (and fantasies and desires). Of course this knowledge is an imagined partitioning of space, as the feared constellations of violence that swell in any one place are never constructed in isolation from other sites of violence. Instead, violent narratives are collected from a wider matrix of the stories-so-far of space. So while it may seem intuitive to associate particular violent geographies with individual or even cultural actors, as they are the agents that manifest, embody and localise violence, it is an Orientalist imagining of these geographies as isolated, exclusive and partitioned that makes possible the articulation of discourses like the 'culture of violence' thesis.

FORMING REASON OR FOMENTING ORIENTALISM? NEOLIBERALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Classical liberalism is comprised of a trinity of beliefs that together assert that the degree to which a society allows an individual to pursue pleasure is its highest virtue. The first of these is the intense focus on the individual, viewed as the most qualified to articulate her or his needs and

desires, so society should be structured on reducing barriers to the realisation of this goal. Second, unfettered markets are considered the most efficient and effective means for encouraging individual autonomy, whereby individuals pursue their requirements and desires through the mechanism of price. And finally, there is a conviction for a noninterventionist state that focuses on the maintenance of competitive markets and the guarantee of individual rights fashioned primarily around a property regime (Hackworth 2007; Plehwe and Walpen 2006). Drawing on classical liberalism's conception of an immutable desire for pleasure, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud (1930/1962) identified an insatiable sexual desire alongside an element of sadism arising from what he viewed as a primitive biological instinct for aggression. He established the notion that the Enlightenment saw 'our' culture overcome its cruel impulses, the achievement of which came primarily via the reason of liberalism, its laws and its 'civilising' effects. Rendered as such, violence was located beyond the boundaries of 'civilisation', lodged in 'barbarian' geographies of pathological places and savage spaces. Civilisation, nonetheless, was argued to have made for a perpetual feeling of discontent, which to Freud (1930/1962) was entropically evidenced by Europe's relapse into brutality during World War I.

As I argue in chapter 3, the wake of World War II saw the Mont Pèlerin Society – the original neoliberal think tank (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009) – resurrect classical liberalism's three basic principles in response to the atrocities of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, and the Soviet Union, and a belief that government intervention to the peril of personal freedoms was responsible for the bloodshed. Out of this geohistorical context, I interpret the anxious origins of neoliberalism as being reactionary to violence, which it theorised could be suppressed and channelled into more productive outlets by a return to Enlightenment thinking and particularly a foregrounding of the ostensible merits of individualism. Democracy was equally imbricated in this revival, as the apocalyptic outcomes of authoritarianism during the war years allowed neoliberalism to be constructed as the sole providence of freedom and hailed as an economic prescription for development. Those states that refused to conform became regarded as 'rogue', 'failed' or were 'condemned to economic backwardness in which democracy must be imposed by sanctions and/or military force by the global community of free nations' (Canterbury 2005: 2). Rhetorical appeals to democracy during proxy wars in Korea in the 1950s, and Vietnam in the 1960s and early 1970s were followed by the unravelling of Keynesian political and economic forces in the late 1970s and early 1980s, allowing neoliberalism to gain momentum as it became increasingly regarded as a panacea for the global economic crisis (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Hackworth 2007).

Neoliberalism's hegemonic rise and current political influence is owed to the 'rule of experts', or technocratic knowledge-elites (Mitchell

2002) and their attempts to (re)constitute class power (Harvey 2005). Such ascendency comes attendant to American geostrategic aims operationalised via a series of crises or 'shocks' – either natural or manufactured – used to pry national economies open to market logic (Klein 2007). This political economic reading also meshes with the poststructuralist view that knowledge and power are inseparable. Foucault (1980) recognised that power/knowledge must be analysed as something that circulates, functions in the form of a chain, and is employed through a matrix. Thus, it was at least partially the successful organisation of neoliberal knowledge-elites into a global network of think tanks that aggrandised neoliberalism to orthodoxy, whereby the power of knowledge-elites and the power of elitist knowledge became mutually reinforcing (Scholler and Groh-Samberg 2006). Neoliberalism-as-ideology gave way to neoliberalism-as-governmentality via the entrenchment of what Stephen Gill (1995) refers to as 'market civilisation', or the transformative practices whereby capitalist expansion became inseparable from a legitimating neoliberal discourse of progress and development.[3] Neoliberalism then is an assemblage of rationalities, strategies, technologies and techniques concerning the mentality of rule that facilitate 'governance at a distance' (Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996; Larner 2000) by delineating a discursive field in which the exercise of power is 'rationalised' (Lemke 2001), thereby encouraging both institutions and individuals to conform to the norms of the market. Neoliberalism's penetration at the level of the subject, or what Foucault (1988) called subjectification, whereby one memorises the truth claims that one has heard and converts this into rules of conduct is, in the context of the Global South, colonialism's second coming. The 'white man's burden' and its salvationary discourse of modernisation are resuscitated and mounted anew through the rationalisation of market-mediated social relations as 'the only alternative', which has become integral to common sense understandings of development.

NEOLIBERAL SALVATION? FROM MYTHIC TO DIVINE VIOLENCE

The neoliberal doctrine conceives itself as upholding a new liberal internationalism based on visions of a single human race peacefully united by a common code of conduct featuring deregulated markets, free trade and shared legal norms among states that promote civic liberties, electoral processes and representative institutions (Gowen 2001). More cynical accounts have questioned the 'peacefulness' of neoliberalism's advance, suggesting it more closely resembles a 'new imperialism' that conditions the use of violence to maintain the interests of an internationalised global elite (Hart 2006; Harvey 2003). This is an emerging sovereign that operates at times through direct military conquest, as in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, but also through governmentality, subjectification to particular

norms (Larner 2000; Lemke 2001) and by regulating mayhem via financial means where the 'global economy comes to be supported by a global organization of violence and vice versa' (Escobar 2004: 18). Either way, neoliberalism is premised on a 'one-size-fits-all' model of policy implementation, assuming 'identical results will follow the imposition of market-oriented reforms, rather than recognising the extraordinary variations that arise as neoliberal reform initiatives are imposed within contextually specific institutional landscapes and policy environments' (Brenner and Theodore 2002: 353). Neoliberalism is thus a spatiotemporal fiction. In a gesture that parodies divinity, neoliberal discourse contends that its prescriptions will remake 'the Other' in 'our' image through the logic bestowed upon them by unrestricted markets, while simultaneously believing the contextually embedded historical geographies to be quite inconsequential to its effective implementation and functioning. In other words, neoliberal discourse produces a unified vision of history, which relegates 'Others' to a traditional past by presenting modernity as an inescapable trajectory, where inherited structures either yield to or resist the new, but can never produce it themselves. This occurs, James Clifford (1988: 5) argues, 'whenever marginal peoples come into a historical or ethnographic space that has been defined by the Western imagination. "Entering the modern world," their distinct histories quickly vanish. Swept up in a destiny dominated by the capitalist West, these suddenly "backward" peoples no longer invent local futures'.

Neoliberal ideology assumes that with the conferment of reason via modernity's supposedly infallible grip, the 'irrationality' of 'Oriental' cultures of violence will be quieted by a market rationality that recalls classical liberalism's pleasure principle and channels gratification – both sadistic and carnal – into consumerism and the pursuit of material rewards. Such an assumption is fantasy. The power of the neoliberal order consists not of being right in its view of politics, but in its ability to claim the authority of scientific truth based on 'economic science' when and where political goals are being defined. Neoliberal reforms are legitimised through a purported econometric supremacy, whereby the public comes to accept the supposed wisdom of knowledge-elites (Scholler and Groh-Samberg 2006). It is the fetishism of place, the mobilisation of popular geographical prejudices and the supposed provision of rationality in the face of 'irrational' violence that gives neoliberalism its licence to (re)direct public policy. Proponents never acknowledge that violence, inequality and poverty are wrought by neoliberal reform. Instead, if conditions in the Global South or among the lower classes have deteriorated under neoliberalism, it is said to be an outcome of personal or cultural failures to enhance their own human capital (Harvey 2005). Dag Tuastad (2003) has called this the 'new barbarism' thesis, which explains violence through the omission of political and economic interests and contexts in its descriptions, and presents violence as a result of traits embedded in

local cultures. Here again, violence sits in places; only in this case, through a grotesque representation of 'the Other', the virulent imaginative geographies of neoliberal discourse erase the contingency, fluidity and interconnectedness of the spaces in which all violent narratives are formed. In other words, violence is problematically framed as though it is particular to a specific place/culture, rather than acknowledging the complex relational geographies that give rise to its formation and expression.

By recognising that the structural violence of neoliberalism is everywhere (Farmer 2004; Uvin 2003), 'local' experiences of violence that seemingly occur in isolation from the wider matrix of space are in fact tied to the 'global', which renders violence somewhat 'everyday'. This very mundanity, however, is what is of primary importance in understanding the power of neoliberal violence, as this ordinary character marks it as 'mythic'. In 'Critique of Violence', Benjamin's (1986) primary distinction is one between a negatively pronounced 'mythic violence' and its positive other, which he called 'divine violence'. Mythic violence is equated with law, as it is both law-positing and law-preserving, and as such it is also the creator and the protector of the prevailing political and legal order. In contrast, rather than being positively defined, divine violence can only be delineated by what it is not, as it 'is simply destructive of the given order without promising anything except the promise of the new itself' (Rasch 2004: 86). Benjamin condemns the juridicopolitical order, finding the mythic violence that constitutes it 'executive' and 'administrative', and thus utterly deplorable and in need of elimination. Divine violence, as a 'pure immediate violence', is thus charged with opposing and even annihilating mythic violence and the order it has established:

> Just as in all spheres God opposes myth, mythic violence is confronted by the divine. And the latter constitutes the antithesis in all respects. If mythic violence is law-making, divine violence is law-destroying; if the former sets boundaries, the latter boundlessly destroys them; if mythic violence brings at once guilt and retribution, divine [violence] only expiates; if the former threatens, the latter strikes; if the former is bloody, the latter is lethal without spilling blood. (Benjamin 1986: 297)

In spite of the religious phrasing, mythic violence simply reproduces the existing structures of power and violence, whereas by being essentially anarchic, divine violence is thought to wipe the slate clean and thus holds within it the promise of a new order, removed from the perpetuation of legal or any other form of force (Rasch 2004; Zizek 2008).

Mythic violence produces guilt through its appeal to legal and other forms of normativity, where the production of such guilt under neoliberalism occurs through the simple fact of being 'Other'. Deliverance, in neoliberal terms, comes through 'rationalisation', 'civilisation' and the final realisation of transitioning to its particular juridicopolitical order. But to the marginalised, this does not expiate guilt; instead it simply

compounds and intensifies it, and this is precisely where Benjamin would suggest that divine violence steps in on the side of the disaffected. Divine violence 'comes as if from the outside to limit the space of the political, indeed, to mark that space for demolition . . . it assumes that the perplexing knot of asymmetry at the source of the political can be cut by a single, simple act of violence that will "found a new historical age"' (Rasch 2004: 94). Thus, although premised on notions of utopian salvation, neoliberalism is not divine, and neither is its violence. Neoliberalism and its structural violence are mythic, premised upon the geotemporal fiction of a flat, static and planar matrix (Hart 2006; Sparke 2005) and the construction of a political, economic and legal 'order' (Springer 2010). And while neoliberalism promotes the idea that it will dissolve direct violence, it often reinforces the structural violence that generates the very phenomenon it suggests it is attempting to nullify. It is this very ontological disjuncture that will inevitably shatter the neoliberal order's validity as it is inexorably placed at the merciless threat of subaltern divine violence.

CONCLUSION

The movement of neoliberalism towards economic orthodoxy, and its eventual capture of such hegemony, was not only achieved through dissemination of its class project geographically through 'shocks' or otherwise, but also by spreading its worldviews across various discursive fields (Plehwe and Walpen 2006). Through this merger of discourse and an imperative for spatial diffusion, neoliberalism has constructed virulent imaginative geographies that appeal to common sense rhetorics of freedom, peace and democracy through the destructive principles of Orientalism, and in particular by proposing a static and isolated place-based 'culture of violence' thesis in the context of 'the Other'. These representations of space and place 'are never merely mirrors held up to somehow reflect or represent the world but instead enter directly into its constitution (and destruction). Images and words release enormous power, and their dissemination can have the most acutely material consequences' (Gregory and Pred 2007: 2). Neoliberalism is a discourse, and words do damage as actors perform their 'scripted' roles. But neoliberalism is also a practice that has 'actually existing' circumstances (Brenner and Theodore 2002) where new violences are created. Thus, the Global South has become 'the theatre of a multiplicity of cruel little wars that, rather than barbaric throwbacks, are linked to the current global logic' (Escobar 2004: 18). Yet there is nothing necessarily 'neoliberal' about Orientalism. Its entanglement with the neoliberal doctrine is very much dependent upon the context in which neoliberalisation occurs. Initially conceived during the Enlightenment, and later revived in the postwar

era, neoliberalism had a 'western' birth, radiating outwards across the globe as the sun was setting on Keynesian economics.

Orientalism is, however, entangled in the project of imperialism (Said 1993), which aligns it with neoliberalism insofar as the latter represents a new, discursive form of 'empire' (Hardt and Negri 2000; Pieterse 2004), wherein the principles, practices, theories and attitudes of a particular class-based faction maintaining economic control over various territories remains intact. And so the pernicious discourses that support neoliberalism as a 'resurgent imperialism' remain largely unchanged from the colonial era (Hart 2006). If, as Richard Peet (2000: 1222) argues, 'economic rationality is a symbolic logic formed as part of social imaginaries, formed that is in culture', then like the project of colonialism, and indeed in keeping with the 'Self'-expanding logic of capital and its fundamental drive to capture new sites for (re)production (Harvey 2005), neoliberalism is intimately bound up in articulating and valorising cultural change. Yet in order for such change to be seen as necessary, the 'irrationality' of 'the Other' must be discursively constructed and imagined. This is precisely where neoliberalism and Orientalism converge. Neoliberalisation proceeds as a 'civilising' enterprise; it is the confirmation of reason on 'barbarians' who dwell beyond. Reason, like truth, is an effect of power, and its language developed out of the Enlightenment as an antithetical response to 'madness', or the outward performances of those seen as having lost what made them human (Foucault 1965). Reason as such, triumphs at the expense of the nonconformist, the unusual, 'the Other'. As a consequence, neoliberal ideas are proselytised to rescind the ostensible irrationality and deviance of 'the Other'. A closely related second reason for evangelism relates to the purported 'wisdom' of neoliberalism, which repeatedly informs us that 'we' have never had it as good as we do right now, and thus 'Others' are in need of similar salvation. If 'they' are to be ruled, whether by might or by markets, they must become like 'us'.

The discourse of neoliberalism maintains a sense of rationalism precisely because it appeals to reason and not experience as the basis of its power. As Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore (2002: 353) argue, 'the manifold disjunctures that have accompanied the worldwide imposition of neoliberalism – between ideology and practice; doctrine and reality; vision and consequence – are not merely accidental side effects of this disciplinary project. Rather, they are among its most essential features'. In other words, the effects of neoliberalisation (poverty, inequality and mythic violence) are ignored, and in their place a common sense utopianism is fabricated (Bourdieu 1998). And so we stand at 'the end of history' (Fukuyama 1992), or at least so we are told, wherein the monotheistic imperative of one God gives way to one market and one globe. Yet the certainty of such absolutist spatiotemporality is in every respect chimerical. Space and time are always becoming, invariably under construction. The future is open, and to suggest otherwise is to conceptualise space as a

vast lacuna. There are always new stories yet to be told, new connections yet to be made, new contestations yet to erupt, and new imaginings yet to blossom (Massey 2005). As Said (1993: 7) argued, 'Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings'. This sentiment applies as much to the geographies of neoliberalism as it does to violent geographies.

If so much of the world's violence is made possible through virulent imaginings, then perhaps the first step towards peace is a collective imagining of nonviolence. Undoubtedly, this is an exercise made possible through culture via human agency because, '[i]f violence "has meaning", then those meanings can be challenged' (Stanko 2003: 13). Yet conceiving peace is every bit as much a geographic project. Violence sits in places in a very material sense; we experience the world through our emplacement in it, where violence offers no exception to this cardinal rule of embodiment. But there is no predetermined plot to the stories-so-far of space, the horizons of place are forever mercurial, and geographies can always be reimagined. Geography is not destiny any more than culture is, and as such the possibility of violence being bound in place is only accomplished through the fearful and malicious imaginings of circulating discourses. Put differently, it is the performative effects of Orientalism and other forms of malevolent knowledge that allow violence to curl up and make itself comfortable in particular places. What can emerge from such understandings is a 'principled refusal to exclude others from the sphere of the human' and an appreciation of how 'violence compresses the sometimes forbiddingly abstract spaces of geopolitics and geo-economics into the intimacies of everyday life and the innermost recesses of the human body' (Gregory and Pred 2007: 6).

Violence is not the exclusive preserve of 'the Other' rooted in the supposed determinism of either biology or culture as neoliberal discourse would have us believe; it populates the central structures of all societies. The capacity for violence exists within the entirety of humanity, but so too does its opposite, the rejection of violence. There are choices to be made each moment of every day, and to imagine peace is to actively refuse the exploitative structures, virulent ideologies and geographies of death that cultivate and are sown by violence. This emancipatory potential entails challenging the discourses that support mythic violence through a critical negation of the circuits it promotes, and nonviolent engagement in the sites – both material and abstract – that it seeks to subjugate. It requires a deep and committed sense of 'Self'-reflection to be able to recognise the circuitous pathways of violence when it becomes banal, systematic and symbolic. And it involves the articulation of new imaginative geographies rooted not in the 'architectures of enmity' (Gregory 2004a), but in the foundations of mutual admiration, respect

and an introspective sense of humility. By doing so, we engage in a politics that reclaims the somatic as a space to be nurtured, reproduces familiar and not so familiar geographies through networks of solidarity built on genuine compassion, rewrites local constellations of experience with the poetics of peace and ultimately undermines the discourse of neoliberalism.

NOTES

1. Nonetheless, the literature is rife with examples where the phrase 'culture of violence' has been employed (see Curle 1999; Jackson 2004; Rupesinghe and Rubio 1994). What these accounts have in common is that they either refuse to offer a definition, suggesting that both the concept itself and the lack of consensus on significance do not allow for one, or they fail to offer systematic attention to the presumed functioning of its dynamics. All that is certain about this confused term is its capacity to qualify particular peoples and places as inherently violent.

2. 'Commonsense', as David Harvey (2005: 39) argues, 'is constructed out of long-standing practices of cultural socialization often rooted deep in regional or national traditions. It is not the same as the "good sense" that can be constructed out of critical engagement with the issues of the day. Commonsense can, therefore, be profoundly misleading, obfuscating or disguising real problems under cultural prejudices'.

3. This is an oversimplified summary of neoliberalism's rise, as there were a number of struggles and setbacks before what started as a marginalised sense of idealism became a dominant global orthodoxy. While Harvey's (2005) 'brief history' offers an authoritative overview of how this ideational project was transformed into programmes of socioeconomic and state transformation beginning in the late 1970s, Peck (2008: 3) has gone further back to account for the 'prehistories' of 'protoneoliberalism', demonstrating that the neoliberal project was never inevitable, but one of '[d]issipated efforts, diversions and dead ends'.

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SIX
Zombie Apocalypse!

What Perry Anderson (2000: 15) once referred to as 'the neoliberal grand slam' unquestionably took a massive hit in the final months of 2008 when the US mortgage industry imploded causing several large insurance houses to go bankrupt, major investment banks to fail and the Security and Exchange Commission along with numerous credit rating agencies (i.e., those organisations ostensibly designed to regulate financial institutions) to become discredited. Although the American taxpayer's pocketbook footed the bill for a $700 billion corporate bailout organised by the outgoing Bush administration, the crisis was hardly a national one. The effects of what began as an American 'subprime mortgage crisis' cut much deeper as the financial system itself, and hence the crisis it spawned was necessarily global in scope. As Peck, Theodore and Breener (2010: 94) contend, all around the world 'The free-market project is on the ropes. Never before has the question of neoliberalism's political, economic, and social role – culpability might be a better word – been debated with such urgency, so globally, and in such a public manner'. Indeed, both the mainstream media and the blogosphere alike were abuzz with commentators declaring that the Wall Street meltdown was the final curtain call for neoliberalism (see Klein 2008; Stiglitz 2008; Wallerstein 2008). Such reactions might be expected from the left, as questioning the imperial structure of the world economy and its underlying gender and class hierarchies is par for the course. Yet it is perhaps a little surprising that all sides of the intellectual and political spectrum were so vociferous, where in the United States in particular, criticisms of neoliberalism were coming from the unlikely source of the libertarian right in order to promote a racist agenda (see Campo-Flores 2010; Coulter 2008). Even at the upper echelons of political and economic power, some elites started to refer to 'neoliberalism' as a catchphrase for the errors arising from the recent

crisis, albeit without really questioning existing power relations or the role of capital, competitiveness and economic growth in the general malaise (Brand and Sekler 2009b).

Neoliberalism is more than a state form or particular set of policies, and this is precisely why I argue that it is politically important to consider neoliberalism as a discourse through which a political economic form of power-knowledge is constructed. For this reason, this final chapter does not offer an analysis of the changing policies that might be associated with 'postneoliberalism', and instead focuses on how such terminology is problematic insofar as it attempts to draw a discursive separation from a neoliberal moment (Springer 2012) that continues to have devastating resonant effects. Following this introduction, I begin by interrogating the 'end of neoliberalism' discourse that has become so commonplace since the onset of the recent financial crisis. Even though neoliberalism is ultimately a dead letter, I view the assumption that neoliberalism has ended as ultimately incorrect, I suggest instead that what has materialised through the organised corporate bailouts is a weakening of the appeal of Marxian arguments and Keynesian arrangements by those engaged in protests against neoliberalism. My hope is that these developments do not compound the power of capitalism and the arguments of the political right, but instead open a critical space for deeper consideration of the politics and practices of resisting neoliberalism as was evidenced by the Occupy Wall Street protest and the global movement it inspired. Next I attempt to unpack the 'post' in the various postneoliberalism arguments and indicate that despite the desire to transcend neoliberal strictures, there is an irrefutable degree of continuity to neoliberalism that must be understood if we ever hope to abandon this acrimonious version of capitalism to the annals of the past. In the conclusion I offer some thoughts on the frightening nature of the current moment, where neoliberalism's continuing salience no longer rests on its intellectual project, but on its crisis-driven approach to governance, arguing that what is currently transpiring is effectively a zombie apocalypse.

THE END OF NEOLIBERALISM?

Since the onset of the financial crisis in late 2008, the intellectual left has had much to say about the future of neoliberalism, with some calling for an indictment of Wall Street (Klein 2008), while others suggest that the time is ripe for a rereading of our economic landscapes to appreciate that it is only owing to noncommodified practices that people have actually been able to cope in these difficult times (White and Williams 2012). A general 'end of neoliberalism' discourse has picked up steam (Stiglitz 2008), as many G20 countries now openly discuss the idea of a return to Keynesian-styled arrangements, stressing increased government over-

sight. Indeed, the bulk of the debate has centred on how the practices and ideologies of free market capitalism, or 'neoliberalism', have been discredited, and the need for restraining market forces through regulatory reform and state intervention (see Altvater 2009; Davidson 2009; Skidelsky 2010; Taylor 2011; Wallerstein 2008). However, such accounts are problematic insofar as they are concerned with long-run geoeconomic and geopolitical dynamics, thus presuming that it is a singular inherited regulatory system that is supposedly in crisis and will precipitate systemic collapse (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010). In other words, in what is a recurring theme, they treat neoliberalism as a monolithic entity, and fail to recognise its particularities as a political project, its hybridities as an institutional matrix, and its mutations as an ideological construct.

The idea that neoliberalism itself is 'in crisis' presupposes an understanding of neoliberalism in the sense of a *noun*. That is, the designation of 'ism' leads us to a dead end inasmuch as it represents a theoretical abstraction that is disconnected from actual experience. Neoliberal*ism* is a pure, paradigmatic and static construct of universal, monolithic and exogenous processes that transform places from somewhere 'outside', resulting always and everywhere in the same homogenous and singular outcome as the sequencing is predefined. Such a conceptualisation of neoliberalism might indeed be vulnerable to a scenario of systemic failure and crisis (Kotz 2009). Neoliberal*isation* alters this slightly by recognising contextual specificities and neoliberalism's necessary articulations with existing geopolitical, socioeconomic and juridicoinstitutional frameworks that result in hybridisation and plurality of forms (Ward and England 2007; Willis, Smith and Stenning 2008). Yet the implication, based on its retained status as a *noun*, is that perhaps eventually the unperfected process will be completed, which still problematically alludes to a blueprint to which individual neoliberalisations will eventually evolve. Indeed, it is this juxtaposition between paradigm and particularities that has led to a questioning of whether neoliberalism even exists at all (see Barnett 2005; Castree 2006).

However, if we are to approach neoliberalism/neoliberalisation through highlighting practices and procedures as they unfold in everyday contexts, where they can be pointed to, named, challenged, examined from different angles and be shown to contain inconsistencies (Le Heron 2009), new spaces are opened that encourage a different interpretation of crises. In this sense, neoliberalism is to be read as a *verb*, and understood in a processual, unfolding and action-oriented sense, even if and when our language and writing hasn't caught up with our thinking and we retain its '-ism' and '-isation' usages. Neoliberalising practices are thus understood as necessarily and always overdetermined, contingent, polymorphic, open to intervention, reconstituted, continually negotiated, impure, subject to countertendencies and in a perpetual process of becoming. In utilising this dynamic conception of neoliberalism-as-a-*verb* over

static notions of neoliberalism-as-a-*noun* we arrive at the conclusion that while particular social spaces, regulatory networks, sectoral fields, local formations and so forth will frequently be hampered by crises, this does not necessarily imply that they will resonate throughout an entire aggregation of neoliberalism. In other words, because 'neoliberalism' indeed does not exist as a coherent and fixed edifice, as an equilibrial complex or as a finite end-state and is instead more appropriately understood as a discourse, it is consequently unlikely to *fail* in a totalising moment of collapse (Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2010).

It is important to remember that neoliberalism's transformation from a marginalised intellectual perspective into a hegemonic ideology began with economic crisis as the postwar Keynesian arrangements began to unravel. As neoliberalism mutated into a series of unique and hybridised state projects, regulatory failures and recurrent crises would continue to distinguish, if not energise, the uneven dispersion of neoliberalising practices across the globe. James Crotty and Gary Dymski (1999: 2) were already asking questions concerning neoliberalism's relationship to crisis in the wake of the Asian crisis, suggesting that it had 'arisen due to long-term contradictions embedded in the structures and policies of the global neoliberal regime, political and economic contradictions internal to affected Asian nations and the destructive short-term dynamics of liberalised global financial markets'. In fact, recognition for the crisis prone nature of capitalism and its creative destruction dates back to at least the time of Karl Marx's (1867/1976) first volume of *Capital*. Expectedly then, the Asian crisis was itself preceded by several major, but localised 'neoliberal' financial crises such as Mexico in 1994, Turkey in 1990 and the Latin American crisis of the early 1980s. Each of these crises can be interpreted as having resulted from the regulatory struggles and institutional frameworks instituted via the 'development' agenda, which was established during the 'roll-back' phase of neoliberalism in the wake of the Keynesian crisis (Peck 2001; Peck and Tickell 2002).

The incessant series of 'shocks' (Klein 2007) and crises of neoliberalism's own making, including increasing environmental ruination (Heynen, McCarthy, Prudham and Robbins 2007; McCarthy and Prudham 2004), deepening social exclusion (Gough 2002; Kingfisher 2007), heightened ethnonationalism and Orientalism (Desai 2006; Goldberg 2009), amplified authoritarianism (Canterbury 2005; Giroux 2004; Springer 2009) and escalating violence (Auyero 2000; Goldstein 2005; Springer 2012b), have accordingly shaped the ongoing reconstruction and 'roll-out' of neoliberalisation. While such internal crises may be managed, at least temporarily through a trenchant security regime and its revanchist practices of surveillance (Coleman 2004; Monahan 2006), policing (Herbert 2001; Samara 2010), penalisation (Peck 2003; Wacquant 2001), border controls (Gilbert 2007; Sparke 2006) and a global 'war on terror' (Dalby 2007; Lafer 2004), they cannot be resolved within the context of neoliberalism

itself. This results in a series of escalations where each subsequent crisis surpasses its predecessor in terms of severity (Duménil and Lévy 2011), consigning the whole regime to permanent volatility (Rapley 2004). This series of growing instabilities culminates in a chronic crisis of capitalist overaccumulation (Glassman 2006; Harvey 2003), which has long been recognised as a cyclical tendency (Kropotkin 1891/2005; Marx 1867/1976), and in this sense, neoliberalisation and crisis can be understood as mutually constitutive phenomena.

Given the relationship between neoliberalism and crises, moments of crisis do not prefigure an impending collapse of the neoliberal project. Instead, crises actually represent a continuation that offers a window on the character of neoliberalism as an adaptive regime of socioeconomic governance (Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2010). The corporate bailouts thus are not necessarily reflective of a terminal moment for neoliberalism, but instead represent a continuation of the class project (Harvey 2005), reconfigured under a *modus operandi* that explicitly returns its accumulative practices to the basis of taxation. I use the idea of 'return' here to remind readers that, notwithstanding the evolutionary, divine rights and social contract theories, all of which have been largely discredited by the archaeological record, anthropologists widely recognise that most governments were originally born through violent coercion (see Barclay 1982/1996; Carneiro 1970; Clastres 1989/2007; Fletcher 1997; Rojas 2002; Yoffee 2005), where the forced extraction of production 'surpluses' from producers, or 'tax', was instituted by elites ostensibly to provide insurance to the subjugated that they would be protected from other bullies. Renowned Russian novelist and philosopher Leo Tolstoy (1990/2004: 31) argued that along with a lack of land, taxes are the equivalent of enslavement as they drive people into a compulsory wage labour, where 'history shows that taxes never were instituted by common consent, but, on the contrary always only in consequence of the fact that some people having obtained power by conquest . . . imposed tribute not for public needs, but for themselves. And the same thing is still going on'. In other words, taxes were and continue to be taken by those who have the means of violence to enforce such tribute. Later tax evolved to include notions of social service provision, the height of which was Keynesianism, but even as portions of such tribute became used for 'public aims', taxes were still designed for purposes that were more harmful than useful to the majority. As Henry David Thoreau (1849/2010: 21) proclaimed, refusing to pay taxes 'would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood'.

Of course we know that the ostensibly 'gentler' model of Keynesian taxation was disassembled under neoliberalisation, which saw taxes return to their more violent originary purpose. The difference now is that while social welfare is almost universally in shambles as states funnel tax money either into debt repayment or their respective security appara-

tuses and military pursuits, taxpayers who have been stripped of their own social safety nets are presently being coerced to play saviour to those very corporate and elite interests that have been slowly pulling the rug out from under them since the 1970s. Taxation, as a result, has become a public anathema of sorts, which ultimately weakens the popular appeal of Keynesian ideas while increasing the temptation of ultra-rightist libertarianism, evidenced by the meteoric rise of the Tea Party movement in the United States, and more recently the appeal of Donald Trump as a presidential candidate. However, far from rendering leftist politics obsolete, the 'anticapitalist movement' has also been galvanised by the crisis, particularly those elements espousing a decidedly anarchist position (see A Committee of Outside Agitators 2008; Anarcho 2008; CrimethInc. 2009; Workers Solidarity Movement 2009). The rise of polarised positions is of significant concern with respect to the latent potential for violence that exists as diametrically opposed viewpoints come into conflict, but what the recent crisis has at least potentially precipitated is the weakening of neoliberalism's political legitimacy. People are now openly asking questions as to why the general population should shoulder the responsibility of those who got us all into this mess by effectively paying for the financial misappropriation of a small group of wealthy elites.

The financial bailouts have accordingly tied tax policy more explicitly to exploitation, which has thereby exposed taxation and bailouts as capital accumulation via a compounding of state and class power rather than the product of just one or the other. This is where an anarchist critique supersedes Marxian analyses as it allows for a more comprehensive view of the multiple intersections of domination as opposed to a singular focus on class exploitation and is consequently able to recognise the current conjuncture as a new method of extracting surplus. Ultimately, the crisis has threatened to overwhelm the discursive hold of neoliberalism on our political-economic imagination, as markets themselves have also come under more intensive scrutiny and suspicion as the gap between rich and poor becomes evermore glaring. As the Occupy Movement amply demonstrated, the ensuing discontent has ultimately stoked the fire for a deeper, anarchistic and more emancipatory struggle engaged via nonviolent means. The inherent inequality and 'othering' of neoliberalism is now being openly challenged by slogans like 'we are the 99 percent', which has come to signify a united global movement of oppositional struggle against market fundamentalism. Are we then, in light of recent developments, entering a 'postneoliberal' era?

UNPACKING THE 'POST'

Even before the crisis hit, scholars were already beginning to posit what 'postneoliberal' statutory and policy frameworks might look like. Wendy

Larner and David Craig (2005) questioned whether emergent partnership programmes and social governance strategies to strengthen local communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand were indicative of a 'postneoliberal' political environment and institutional landscape, where revamped territorial accountabilities and social outcomes might become possible. Edward Challies and Warwick Murray (2008: 241) took a slightly different approach by comparing the transitional policy and regulatory 'roll-outs' of Aotearoa/New Zealand with that of Chile, and despite noting multiple similarities, differences and continuities in both projects, they highlight the emergent potential that 'the growing body of theory offers in forging postneoliberal alternatives'. The intention of these preliminary assessments of a 'postneoliberal' conjuncture then, was to envision possible transformations that might enable developments beyond what was considered a neoliberal impasse (see also Craig and Porter 2006; Hart 2002).

More recently, a special issue of *Development Dialogue* (Brand and Sekler 2009a), published after the financial meltdown, comes at the idea of 'postneoliberalism' from a much different perspective, specifically examining different responses to the deleterious impacts of neoliberalism and the political economic orthodoxy's mounting failures vis-à-vis contradictions and crises. The focus here then is not on the question of whether a new, postneoliberal era in general has begun, or what criteria might support or negate such an assessment. Rather, Ulrich Brand and Nicola Sekler consider postneoliberalism as:

> A perspective on social, political and/or economic transformations, on shifting terrains of social struggles and compromises, taking place on different scales, in various contexts and by different actors. All postneoliberal approaches have in common that they break with some specific aspect of 'neoliberalism' and embrace different aspects of a possible postneoliberalism, but these approaches vary in depth, complexity and scope, as well as everyday practices and comprehensive concepts. (2009b: 6)

Understood in this sense, neoliberalism might be considered as invariably already 'postneoliberal', or beyond itself, precisely because, as we have seen, neoliberalism is never actually a *noun*, but is instead always a *verb*. In other words, when we consider neoliberalism as an 'actually existing' assemblage of practices (Brenner and Theodore 2002) that function as mutable and 'mobile technologies' (Ong 2007), there is a necessary deviation from the abstraction of neoliberalism as an archetypical, generic and obstinate economic theory. Postneoliberalism here is really an acknowledgement of the path dependency, difference and unevenness of neoliberalisation, and the multiple, variegated and unique mutations that arise as articulation with existing political economic contexts and geoinstitutional configurations occurs.

Given this apparent continuity between neoliberalism and postneoliberalism, it would be useful at this point then to work through some of the senses of postneoliberalism in understanding what the 'post' here might possibly mean. It seems appropriate to frame this discussion in terms of the different theorisations surrounding postcolonialism, and to draw some potential parallels therein. This particular analogy is useful because discussions surrounding postcolonialism have clearly revealed that any prefixed 'post' is inextricably bound to its signifier, which in turn calls the 'post' itself into question (Sharp 2008). In this regard, James Sidaway (2000) identifies three common uses of the term 'postcolonialism', or 'post-colonialism', in his exploratory essay. The first of these relates to successor states, or those societal formations that arose following formal independence from a colonial occupier. The second sense refers to those colonising forces that arose after official colonialism. This could be either internal colonising forms of rule by particular ethnic, identity or class groups against a presumed 'Other', or it could refer to the colonising discourses that arose after colonialism proper but retain a colonial character. These first two senses are typically considered 'post-colonial' (with a hyphen) in that they are thought to operate 'after' colonialism. The hyphen then serves to acknowledge some form of separation or rupture to suggest that colonialism exists in the past. The third, and final sense of the term is written 'postcolonialism' (without a hyphen) to signify a continuation, as it is meant to suggest that while colonialism in its formal sense has ended, it still nonetheless has innumerable resonant effects in the present. This third sense then is the deconstructing critique of colonial discourses and their relentless unfolding of aesthetic, theoretical and political legacies. The best example of this sort of critique, and indeed one that is widely considered as responsible for establishing postcolonialism as a theoretical perspective, is Edward Said's (1978/2003) account of Orientalism. As was explored in the previous chapter, Orientalism can be understood as both a discursive formation and a 'corporate institution' that materialises its constellation of power/knowledge as 'a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts' for the production and domination of presumed 'Others' (Said 1978/2003: 3, 12), which is a key discursive resource in constituting the anatomy of neoliberal power.

Bringing the discussion back to postneoliberalism, it is difficult to draw a direct comparison to the first sense of post-colonialism identified above. Neoliberalism is not a condition that states can easily achieve formal 'independence' from by declaring a complete qualitative break from the past. Institutional legacies die hard, and as such, to speak of a 'postneoliberal' successor state, while perhaps plausible, seems a little premature. Even as some studies are keen to emphasise the nationalisation of companies, progressive social policies and the promulgation of new constitutions following elections in various Latin American coun-

tries, including the promised 'new socialism for the twenty-first century' of Hugo Chavez's victory in Venezuela in 1998, the rise of the Socialist Party and Ricardo Lagos in Chile in 2000, Lula de Silva's Worker Party victory in Brazil in 2002, and indigenous socialist leader Evo Moralez entering office on an antineoliberal platform in 2005 (see Ceceña 2009; Macdonald and Ruckert 2009), others are quick to underline the continuity of neoliberalism's regulatory frameworks and the marginalisation of emancipatory experiences as the emergent neodevelopmentalism closes spaces for alternatives in countries like South Africa and Argentina (see Bond 2009; Gago and Sztulwark 2009). Likewise, difficulties arise when we try to draw a line of similitude to the second sense of post-colonialism, as neoliberalisation is always an intramural process driven by particular local actors, and unlike colonising practices arising after colonialism where we might find colonial-like expressions of domination exerted by one group over another, neoliberalising forces of dominance arising internally from a particular class-based group represent the very heart of the neoliberal project itself (Carroll and Carson 2006; Harvey 2005; Sparke 2004). This points us back to the discussion above, where we are not able to properly differentiate between postneoliberalism and neoliberalism.

Yet, perhaps such continuity should be read as the overarching and most fundamental point, which moves us into the third sense of postcolonial in its unhyphenated form. Here 'postneoliberalism' collapses its prefix into its signifier and is to be understood not as a condition arising after neoliberalism, but as a critical theoretical standpoint where we can position ourselves to recognise the banality of neoliberal discursive formations (Springer 2010) and perhaps begin to successfully strip away its capacity as a 'corporate institution' and the corresponding common sense presentation of neoliberalism as monolithic, impenetrable and beyond reproach. Thus, by mounting deconstructive criticisms of neoliberalism's power/knowledge matrix and its uneven distribution across various geohistorical, political economic and sociocultural fields, critical scholars have adopted a postneoliberal position from the very moment they began to identify neoliberalism as an ideological hegemonic project (see Duménil and Lévy 2004; Harvey 2005; Peet 2002; Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhoffer 2006) or alternatively as a complex of governmentality (see Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Larner 2003; Lemke 2001). Such engagements can be read as a reification of neoliberalism à la J. K. Gibson-Graham's (1996) assessment of capitalism, but like Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant (2001), I remain convinced that such challenges are preferable to accepting neoliberalism's euphemising vocabulary and, at the very least, potentially more enabling than silence. If philosophers like Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida have taught us anything, it is that critique is at once the seed of resistance and the impetus of transformation, and thus its potential to dismantle neolib-

eralism's exigent and disciplinary logics (Gill 1995) cannot be overstated. If the point is to change the world, where do we begin to initiate such a process but from sharing our imaginings of and desires for alternatives? Neoliberalism itself, lest we forget, began as a marginalised discourse, an ideological ideal on the fringes of right wing political thought (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009; Peck 2008).

CONCLUSION

The ambiguity of postneoliberalism forces us to recognise and appreciate such breaks from neoliberalism without losing sight of its continuities (Brand and Sekler 2009b). This is why the current moment is so frightening, because a new hyphenated postneoliberal era has not arrived and we may instead be bearing witness to the emergence of a new version of neoliberalism that substantially extends its content (Hendrikse and Sidaway 2010). The very notion of crisis consists, Antonio Gramsci (1930/1996: 32–33) once argued, 'precisely in the fact that old is dying and the new cannot be born: in this interregnum, morbid phenomena of the most varied kind come to pass'. So while 'neoliberalism is dead' insofar as it has run out of politically viable ideas, Neil Smith (2008: 2) is also quick to point out that 'it would be a mistake to underestimate its remnant power . . . neoliberalism, however dead, remains dominant', precisely because 'the left has not responded with good and powerful ideas'. Surely Smith must be engaging in an introspective assessment of the current state of critical academic scholarship, which must claim at least some culpability in the perceived ineffectuality of the left as it continues to hold fast to what some activists regard as the same 'boring' political convictions of the last thirty years (Nadia n.d.). While Marxism has lost its appeal with those on the street (arguably long before the recent crisis), this frontline in the contestation of neoliberalism quite clearly shows signs of a revitalisation of radical leftist politics (see Day 2005; Ferrell 2001; Gordon 2009; Graeber 2002; Springer, Ince, Pickerill, Brown and Barker 2012). Both the anticapitalist and antiwar protests that have become increasingly diffuse in recent years point to the emergence of new forms of emancipatory politics, breaking with Marxism's traditional category of class, yet at the same time rejecting conservative logics and particularistic notions of identity politics (Ackelsberg 2009; Newman 2007; Springer 2016).

This is not to say that identity no longer matters, but instead suggests an embrace of agonism (Springer 2011) and the creation of 'convergence spaces' (Routledge 2003), where interest groups may engage in multiscalar political action, celebrate their irreducible plurality and forge general alliances behind the common cause of socioeconomic justice (Featherstone 2005; Wills 2002). So while social struggles are mobilised around issues and concerns that are relationally connected across space, namely,

neoliberalising practices and the various wars through which they have been articulated (Harvey 2003; Lafer 2004), protesters are nonetheless comprised of heterogeneous groups that defy universal subjectification to the proletariat identity, breakdown the binary between 'Self' and 'Other', and are clearly not interested in formulating strategies that replicate traditional representative structures (Pickerill and Chatterton 2006). This goes some way towards explaining why it was so difficult for media commentators and municipal authorities to put their finger on exactly what the Occupy Movement represented and who represented it. In Denver, a frustrated Mayor Michael Hancock insisted that Occupy Denver choose leadership to deal with city and state officials, where protesters responded by electing Shelby, a three-year-old border collie (Pous 2011). The anarchistic refusal of Occupy Denver to define its 'leadership' in the terms of the state is symptomatic of a political climate on the left that no longer believes in the authority of either government officials or a vanguard party. Although a Marxist himself, Smith (2008: 2) seemed to implicitly recognise the limitations of Marxian proposals that continue to work within the confines of the state, noting how the recent fate of various Latin American governments suggests that 'the parliamentary road to socialism is not necessarily inimical to neoliberalism, indeed, a certain "liberal neoliberalism", neoliberalism with a smiling face, now seems to be an ascendant alternative to its harder edged, revanchist inflection'. This version of neoliberalism, however, may be the calm before the storm, an interregnum, where morbid phenomena simply gestate as an even more regressive and dominating form of capitalism is (re)animated.

With such a macabre realisation, we might ask 'which way the tide is *actually* going, when financial risk is being socialized at an incredible rate, and when the rationalities of Wall Street and Washington have become sutured together as never before?' (Peck 2010: 109, original emphasis). Is this really a nightmare on Wall Street, or simply the nightmare before Christmas, where financial elites will wake up tomorrow with even more 'gifts' piled around their hearth? Only time will tell, but it's hard not to suspect that the bailouts have simply allowed politicians to play Santa Claus to the wealthiest of the wealthy, while the poorest of the poor are left, as they always are, to clean up the cookie crumbs and spilt milk. In the face of mounting police brutality and violence against a largely peaceful anticapitalist movement it becomes clear that while neoliberalism may be essentially dead as an intellectual project, as a mode of crisis-driven governance, its dominance remains 'animated by technocratic forms of muscle memory, deep instincts of self-preservation, and spasmodic bursts of social violence' (Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2010: 105). Wars, famine, racism, poverty, environmental destruction, forced eviction, alienation, social exclusion, homelessness, inequality, violence and recurrent economic crises are the footprints of neoliberalism's evermore capricious gait, a path of devastation that could mark the emergence of

its 'zombie' phase (Fine 2010; Peck 2010), 'dead when it comes to achieving human goals and responding to human feelings, but capable of sudden spurts of activity that cause chaos all around' (Harman 2009: 12). This makes a critical decentring of the capitalist project all the more necessary and urgent. Zombies, after all, feed on human flesh.

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Conclusion

From Enslavement to Obliteration

FEAR, EMPTINESS, DESPAIR

Neoliberalism is positioned as the cure for the common complaint that our societies are failing, as though rolling out even more of the same logic of liberalisation, privatisation, deregulation and the marketisation of everyday life will allow society to rise above the challenges we face. We saw this replication and entrenchment of neoliberal ideas become explicitly manifest with profound effect in the aftermath of the most recent global financial crisis in 2008 (Birch and Mykhnenko 2010; Duménil and Lévy 2011). Among politicians there was a lot of discussion of deepening resolve and commitment to helping everyday families, and the wrists of a few companies, bankers and CEOs were slapped, but ultimately the entire system was bailed out and propped back up (Mirowski 2014). An economic rationality that should have been on the brink of extinction was put on life support as the world's political elite rallied like never before to save the world's economic elite. In many instances this was of course simply the right hand forking over public resources to the left hand's private stash. The supposed divine death of neoliberalism turned out to be its very same moment of resurrection, as a protection racket emerged to salvage a weakened project that was ripe for the breaking. There was a moment where we could have insisted on collectivising our societal capacities and realised not only that our pain is their power, but equally that the just rewards of society belong in equal measure to each one of us. To an extent this is what happened in Iceland (Durrenberger and Palsson 2015; Hart-Landsberg 2013), but sadly the rest of the world took almost no notice of this example. Where was the widespread understanding that the world keeps turning because of the contributions we all make to the betterment of each other's lives? It is not competition that keeps us alive, but cooperation, community and conviviality (Kropotkin 1902/2008). Why should anyone be considered persona non grata in a world that equally belongs to everyone? In striding purposefully backwards towards a renewed logic of naturalised markets, competitive individualism and economic self-sufficiency we were all sold short. Neoliberalism is social harmony corruption. It displaces and perverts the amicability that we need for our communities to function as *community*. Amid this disso-

nance the planet itself has been leveraged in the name of the accumulation of wealth, a gamble that when all is said and done ensures that we all lose.

From an environmental standpoint, how much longer do we have before we are past the point of no return, condemned to roam the debris field of an unfit Earth as we approach the end of our place on the planet? Is this obstinate direction of malicious intent that neoliberalism has us following really the measure of our success? While we might look at the events that bore out in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis as a sort of bloodless coup for well-positioned economic power brokers, the ongoing zombie apocalypse of neoliberalism that has ensued in its wake is more indicative of a world that has been bled dry. There is no humanity within the neoliberal project. The shattered existence that so many are forced to live exemplifies a callous lack of concern for the blows to the body politic, and the divisiveness that inequality ensures (Schram 2015). Neoliberalism is warped beyond logic. It has produced a state of mind that ensures the majority is forced to fear for their material well-being on a daily basis, cursed to crawl in the mud of capitalism, stigmatised by the very forms of marginalisation that we should be committing ourselves to undoing. The negative approach of neoliberal ideas has produced a world apart, a prison without walls (Wacquant 2009). There is a geography of exile at play in the reproduction of neoliberalism, both in terms of the discourses of exclusion that have been woven into the fabric of our societies, but also in terms of how we view the precarity of 'Others' (Goldberg 2009; Mitchell 2016). Out of sight out of mind is unfortunately how the problem of the inherent violence of our economic systems is rationalised. We don't want to see the sweatshop labour that produces the clothes we wear, we don't want to hear about the forced evictions that make way for the plantations that feed our appetites, and we don't want to speak of the environmental ruination that is born from the extractive industries that fuel our industries (Springer 2015). The silence is deafening, and yet if symptoms persist, the time will come when we can no longer turn a blind eye to the profundity of the violence that neoliberalism has wrought (Springer 2012). The code is red and time waits for no slave, so how much more can we take before we break from the neoliberal shackles?

As the logic of accumulation intensifies across the Global South, where life and limb become evermore compromised, the stubborn stains of neoliberal ideas become more and more obvious. Although starting to feel the violent effects of neoliberalism come home to roost through expanded forms of dispossession like the subprime mortgage crisis that wreaked havoc across the United States, for much of the middle class there is still a general sense of apathy towards the plight of the poor. Neoliberalism expects you to lower yourself to blind servitude and not ask the critical questions about its political economic makeup and the

uneven geography it has produced. This taken for granted quality is precisely why we need to examine the anatomy of neoliberalism and interrogate the geographies of violence that it promotes. It is the common sense logic, virulent imaginative geographies and the impressions that are left on our psyche that represent the primary instruments of persuasion in the replication of neoliberal ideas. To be a sceptic in perspective of neoliberalism is to be an idealist without a grip on the proceedings of the so-called real world. But there is always more than meets the eye in any question of politics and economics, and the notion of what is 'real' is only made flesh through performative and artefactual productions. The mass appeal madness of neoliberalism is of course disturbing and disabling, but we shouldn't resign ourselves to thinking this means that we must live in a persistent vegetative state where resistance is no longer possible (Tyler 2013). There are errors in the signals, and the discourse that supports neoliberalism is a profound circle of hypocrisy, where in the end the public gets what the public doesn't want. We have come to accept neoliberalism as though it were somehow a necessary evil (Dardot and Laval 2014; Fisher 2009). Even as I write this book, the very fact that I have chosen this as my subject in some ways must be seen as an indication of how neoliberalism has embedded itself into my consciousness. It is a grand deceiver, a mind snare, a dogma that is so profoundly effective at distorting the medium that it has a great many of us living in denial. The entire notion of neoliberalism is a lucid fairy tale, where we seem caught in a dream that has polluted our minds into thinking this is the only reality we can summon (Davis and Monk 2011). But fear, emptiness and despair are not the whole of our political vision. There is a fracture in the equation.

UTOPIA BANISHED

The rising tide of neoliberalism is not one that lifts all boats, but rather a tsunami that inundates our societies with violence and oppression (Springer 2015). As the machine rolls on, an instinct of survival has kicked in for the poor who have been forced to make way for the farce and fiction of a discourse that purports to be the locus of their emancipation, while conspiring to ensure that they effectively pay for the privilege of breathing. When we accept that the chains that bind us to this powerful idea are discursive, it becomes apparent that we can flip the script. This needs to go beyond the diatribes of a mere smear campaign against neoliberalism. In returning to Ivan Illich's thinking on societal transformation and the sweeping away of old myths, we are reminded that to change the narrative we need to tell a new and more powerful tale. So let's begin that process. Let's start telling ourselves that neoliberalism is correct when it says that 'there is no alternative', as indeed there is no

single alternative, *there are many* (Dixon 2014; Graeber 2011b; Scott 2012). Let's start exploring what these alternatives might look like. Let's start practising them *here* and *now* in the present. Let's start to rejoice in our creative capacities, our collective ability and the joy that comes from belonging to the process of metamorphosis. While neoliberalism has had a significant grip on our past, where four decades of intensifying social anomie under neoliberal rule has left a black mark on our societies by structuring them as little more than the realisation of individual desire, such acknowledgement shouldn't prevent us from advocating for something new. I am not encouraging a utopian visioning that replaces the neoliberal lie of an eventual harmonious global village with something equally fanciful. To do so would be to perpetuate an apolitical and ageographical false promise, for the etymology of utopia is 'no place', making it an unrealisable deception. Politics is a commitment to alterity, while geography is a commitment to change. The reason for these obligations becomes clear when we recognise that neither is free from temporality. Thus the hard work of our collective efforts to remake our world through a revitalisation of community requires a commitment to an infinitely demanding struggle (Critchley 2008). It is an arduous responsibility that requires focus and resolve, but dedication to this cause is the realisation of our power. It moves us from a position of passively lamenting how the years condemn, to a demand that neoliberalism doesn't have to represent our collective future.

Neoliberalism is an everyday pox that has made us ill with the sickness of circumspect. The cure is action. To realise lasting change the focus our collective energies need to shift from fighting the old to actively building the new (Goodway 2011; Ince 2012). The great capitulator that neoliberalism represents is powerful, but it is crucial to always remember that it is not an incontrovertible idea. What appears monolithic and permanent is in fact fragmented and temporary. We don't have to retreat to nowhere and hide in the gloomy shadows of a gathering storm. We have the power to push back, the ability to dance in the rain. Should we all hail the grey dawn of a fatalist discourse, in deference to the hierarchy of hierarchies that neoliberalism represents? Or should we instead start to recognise our internal capacities and start organising ourselves in ways that break with neoliberalism and instead celebrate our relationships to each other? This is the choice we have always been faced with in any era under any regime, and the answer can only come from our collective will. Like all political, economic, social and cultural systems, we made neoliberalism, and it accordingly follows that we can unmake it (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009). It is no longer possible to gaze upward and uninterested, hoping that our salvation will come from above in the form of some transcendental shift. In a world where drones patrol the skies and 'democracy' is effected from thirty thousand feet, there is little solace to be found in empyrean daydreaming. Nor is it possible to continue to delude

ourselves with the empty promises of waiting for revolution (see Dean 2012; Smith 2010), a disabling politics that conditions so much of the thinking on the contemporary political Left. We need to start paying close attention to the grounded possibilities of the *here* and *now*, and how our direct action changes the narrative and reconfigures the playing field by moving from a utilitarian mode to an egalitarian one. This is a prefigurative politics, a politics of demanding the impossible, and creating in this moment the sort of world that we would like to see unfolded in the future (Gordon 2007; Maeckelbergh 2011). The prefiguration of alternatives involves organising child-care co-ops, building coalitions, gardening clinics, intentional communities, flash mobs, community kitchens, microradio, unschooling groups, collective hacking, independent media collectives, potluck suppers, free stores, rooftop occupations, direct action organisations, graffiti writing, learning networks, sit-ins, radical samba, peer-to-peer file sharing, squatting, sewing workshops, tree-sitting and monkey-wrenching, public art projects, spontaneous disaster relief, book fairs, street parties, dumpster diving, wildcat strikes, neighbourhood tool-sharing, tenant associations, freecycling activities, workplace organising and culture jamming. All of these examples are 'necessarily autonomous from, and competitive with, the dominant system, seeking to encroach upon the latter's domain, and, eventually, to replace it' (Dominick 2002).

In developing such self-organised counterinstitutions we can of course also work to forge alliances with existing institutions, such as public agencies, universities, workplaces, corporations and museums, while retaining a commitment to transforming them beyond neoliberalism (McKee 2014). To do so we need fortitude, we need clarity, we need purpose, ingredients that are all readily accessible and already present in our communities. Uncertainty blurs the vision, and to remain nameless in the face of the greed killing that neoliberalism represents is to concede defeat. It is for this reason that during the Occupy Movement we dubbed ourselves the 99 percent as a showing of our solidarity (Gitlin 2012; Graeber 2011a; Schneider 2013). The fear that was struck in the heart of the system is undeniable. In the years since 2011 there has been a great deal of chatter that attempts to disempower the Occupy Movement by suggesting that it was a failure (Brenac 2012; Cacciottolo 2012). The indictments of the mainstream corporate media in particular sought to throw-away our collective power by dismissing the movement, particularly by pointing to a lack of leadership (Ostroy 2012). But this was only a demonstration of their profound ignorance with regards to alternative and activist forms of organising, revealing the difficulty that hierarchical institutions have in appreciating a horizontal politics. Power is not something that comes through its capture by a minority group or single individual. The words for these iterations of politics are 'oligarchy' and 'monarchy'. In contrast to these forms of 'archy', *anarchy* is a resource that we all draw

from. 'As we organize to resist, subordinate, and displace corporate power and a self-destructive economic system, we hold in our hearts a vision for an economy based on justice, ecological sustainability, cooperation, and democracy', Caroline Woolard (2013) argues. She continues:

> We look to sites of creation and imagination, where we are forging new systems of exchange, which prefigure a society that puts people and the planet before profit and growth. We use direct democracy and cooperation to clothe, feed, heal, nurture, celebrate, educate, and challenge each other. We do all of this not to profit individually, but to meet the human needs of our community.

Anarchism accordingly proceeds from the position that power is only possible through our actions upon each other, and so too then is it this exact integral bond between each and every one of us that is also the locus of our emancipation. When I say 'anarchism' you may hear 'chaos, violence, and mayhem', but to be clear, when I say 'anarchism' I mean 'cooperation, voluntary association, and mutual aid' (Springer 2016).

INSIDE THE TORN APART

All too often neoliberalism leaves us feeling redundant, as though our efforts at community are hopeless, unimportant of the equivalent of clutching at barbs. Yet to resist neoliberalism is nothing less than a continuing war on stupidity (Graeber 2015). Beginning with the Mont Pèlerin Society and their commitment to propagating neoliberalism, the think tank trials that have experimented with our collective welfare have been a scourge (Carrol and Sapinski 2016; Jones 2014). By advancing detached economic theories of market-based competition that have no appreciation for the material effects and grounded implications we see a profound disconnect within the logic of neoliberalism. It is this rationality of separation that sustains the neoliberal project and it is the basis of its ignorance. By refusing to confront the inequality, poverty and violence of its own making, neoliberals console themselves by happily looking not at cause and effect, but only to their own accumulation of wealth. It is a discourse that perpetuates and even actively promotes utter and extreme selfishness. But the true believers of neoliberalism have proceeded as though we are all none the wiser. Suffer the children and let them know the pain of social exclusion. They simply don't care. Neoliberal disciples would just as soon have us all retching on the dirt on the bottom of their heels than concede that there are any problems with them having their boot in our face. Neoliberalism facilitates a world with a few apex predators, making the rest of us easy meat. It should be obvious that we need to challenge the precepts of neoliberal discourse and the separation it insists upon through its perpetuation of Social Darwinism (Leyva 2009; Macrine 2016). We shouldn't always be counting our successes on a per

capita or individual basis. Can't we admit that sometimes it is crucial to appreciate the common good? Neoliberalism refuses this, where any notion of collectivity is dismissed and demonised. Recognising that an idiosyncratic plague rages throughout our societies is a crucial prelude to fostering meaningful social change and the construction of a new communal philosophy (Guattari 2015; McNally 2006). Of course it is one thing to say we need community, but something else to actually practise what you preach. Words are powerful, and we can counter discourse with discourse, but the success of any new narrative is tied to our ability to take action (Kropotkin 1880/2005; Springer, Souza and White 2016).

The strong-arm tactics of the police further demonstrate the cracks in the regime as protests against neoliberalism are all too often met with the sharp end of state-sponsored violence (Bruff 2016; Tansel 2016). This connection between the order maintained by police and the neoliberal order should have us asking critical questions about the forms of privilege that are being protected. In particular it should have us interrogating the enduring relationship between capitalism and the state (Goldman 1935; Kropotkin 1897). The Faustian bargain of contemporary politics is that we've sacrificed collective control of our economic systems and social reproduction to the institutions and will of the state, which in turn are beholden to the desires of multinational corporations. In this handover of our power to a political system of supposed representation, where the delegation of our will is subject to the revisionist and disingenuous interpretations of a small group of self-motivated political leaders, we all lose. You suffer, I suffer, we all suffer at the hands of elites as they twist the knife slowly into the belly of society by ensuring that the system works for the minority and not the majority. Neoliberalism is an order of the leech. Privatisation offers politicians an opportunity to assign contracts to close associates, deregulation is an occasion for making concessions to companies willing to provide some form of kickback, and liberalisation fuels both speculation and monopolisation allowing the already wealthy to play a game of chance that drives up prices allowing the gap between rich and poor to widen (Chomsky 1999; Harvey 2005). The discourse of neoliberalism leaves us mentally murdered; it is a vision conquest that ensures we are blind to the truth. Yet the discursive moral crusade to extol the supposed virtues of neoliberalism is starting to be seen for what it is, particularly among those who have experienced the brunt of its violence. Neoliberalism renders a significant portion of the population expendable, as though they are human garbage (Ong 2006; Springer 2012). Such unchallenged hate is no longer getting a free pass. More and more the world is collectively awakening to the fact that capitalism in general, and neoliberalism in particular is a parasitical scum on our collective labour, thereby denigrating our corporeal well-being by positioning it as a distant afterthought to the interests of capital accumulation. This argument might be a hard sell in the Global North, where many

continue to benefit, but within the Global South and among the world's poorest of the poor there is ample room for scepticism as labour crackdowns, homelessness, union busting, forced evictions, environmental ruination, unemployment, landlessness and internal displacement all become more frequent in the perpetuation of neoliberal ideals (Springer 2015; Veltmeyer 2013; Westra 2010).

As you close this book on neoliberalism, pick up a new one filled with optimism. Read your favourite poem, gaze at a beloved painting, or better still, become inspired to create your own art. Make room for the joy of belonging to something bigger than yourself; make time for the people you love. Life is short, but it is this very impermanence that makes it beautiful. Each moment is precious, a gift of possibility. Live your life without dwelling in the dull tones of neoliberalism, but instead dreaming in the kaleidoscope of hope. Do in this moment what the messengers of complacency would have you believe is not possible. The self-righteous apostles of neoliberalism are interested only in convincing you that freedom is the wage of sin. But when we think for a minute, it takes almost no mental effort to deduce that this is a ruse meant to disable the politics of rebellion, a gag reflex that attempts to silence the clamouring buzz of those of us who believe in the prospect of meaningful political change and societal transformation. Proponents of neoliberalism are not about to fall on their swords and concede defeat, but the roaring laughter of our gregarious collaboration in the face of oppression will give them much to think about. It is a signal that the spectacle of neoliberalism is entering its final act. Yet the corpus of neoliberalism is of course powerful. We have seen its capacity for violence, for expansion, for cruelty, for variegation, for continuity and even for resurrection (Springer, Birch and MacLeavy 2016). It is an undead monstrosity that contorts and twists to rise again and again, co-opting new domains and capturing new terrains (Aalbers 2013; Peck 2010; Wilson 2016). And yet amid the storm and stress of the infiltrator in our midst there remains room for optimism. While zombies feed on human flesh, they are also the stuff of fiction, fabrications that we have constructed out of our anxieties. They lose their power when we stop believing in them. Instead of revelling in the ongoing horror story of neoliberalism, we need to start telling ourselves a more redemptive tale (Purcell 2016). Inside a world torn apart by greed, there is still good to be found.

WORDS FROM THE EXIT WOUND

A discursive understanding of neoliberalism offers a theoretical frame for understanding its relationship to power. Throughout this book I have argued that power can be understood as a circuitous association or relational assemblage, while also emphasising that such a reading does not

deny a certain and unavoidable materiality to our understandings of how power operates. Neoliberalism is framed within this discussion as a process of political, social, economic, cultural and spatial transformation that positions certain actors in an advantageous position vis-à-vis others. It is here, within the matrix of power, that neoliberalism's materiality comes to the fore. It is expressed symptomatically as privation for the many and privilege for the few. Is changing this social order inconceivable? Must we continue to taste the poison and drink from the neoliberal chalice? How do we undo the corrosive elements to social well-being that have been built by the neoliberal project and the orders of magnitude that such division has achieved in structuring our politics? Remember for Illich (quoted in Viola 2009: 23), '[n]either revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society'. Revolution is a politics of waiting with little prospect of becoming the material reality of the present. Reformation is a politics of bureaucracy with no chance of liberating us from the hierarchies of procedural politics. Both are disabling. Our collective power exists in the *here* and *now*, in this exact moment and the precise places in which we live our lives (Gordon 2008; Springer 2016). The potential for moving beyond neoliberalism is therefore an ordinary story, not one of vanguardism and 'great men'. It begins with a single act of refusal. But as with all things, there is a relationality here. What seems isolated and solitary is in fact embedded within a sprawling rhizome of connectivity that stretches out to the horizon in all directions. It is often the small things that make big changes in our world. But the power of any moment of resistance rests in our ability to appreciate our connections to each other, to realise that the oppression of one represents the oppression of all (Shannon and Rouge 2009; Clark and Martin 2013). Through the prefiguration of alternatives we learn how to govern ourselves in nondominating ways where the possibility of co-optation is minimised and there is no need no tutelage from above (Dominick 2002).

We need to reconvene the solidarity that allowed our species to survive in the first place, where I'm convinced that a renewed faith in and recognition of mutual aid is the missing link in the process of our collective emancipation from neoliberalism. Of course cooperation is happening all about us all the time, we only need to open our eyes and acknowledge it. As Colin Ward so eloquently argued:

> [A]n anarchist society, a society which organizes itself without authority, is always in existence, like a seed beneath the snow, buried under the weight of the state and its bureaucracy, capitalism and its waste, privilege and its injustices, nationalism and its suicidal loyalties, religious differences and their superstitious separatism. . . . Once you begin to look at human society from an anarchist point of view you discover that the alternatives are already there, in the interstices of the dominant power structure. If you want to build a free society, the parts are all at hand. (1973/1996: 18, 20)

The difficulty then is not so much doing things that break with neoliberalism, but rather in convincing ourselves that we're already doing 'un-neoliberal' things all the time (White and Williams 2012). Examples of this interruption can be as complex as organising migrant support networks in response to the failings of the state to react to the unfolding refugee crisis in ways other than recapitulating a logic of exclusion. Such a material intervention disrupts the pervasive fear mongering about an ostensible lack of available social services and offers a concrete solution to the conditions that neoliberalism did much to create. Or examples can be as simple as smiling at someone you pass in the street to unsettle the individualist ethos of neoliberalism. Both demonstrate that another world is possible, opening a discursive space for us to reflect on conflict, and move beyond the pale devolution ad nauseum that neoliberalism foists upon us. We don't need to participate in the rat race. We can say to ourselves 'I abstain', and then set about living into this promise. Each day we can awaken to a life of misery under neoliberalism, or we can alert ourselves to the disciplinary rationalities, strategies, technologies and techniques that it delivers and then simply refuse to play its game.

Neoliberalism has been shot through our societies, but the velocity with which it has impacted our lived experiences should serve as an indication that it is on a trajectory to pass right through the body politic. The force of its impact and the acute penetrating trauma that neoliberalism has caused means that it cannot be sustained. No doubt there will be an exit wound as we rid ourselves of this foreign object, but better to deal with this injury than to receive neoliberalism as a fixed inevitability that we must accept as part of our corporeal makeup. A look at the anatomy of neoliberalism means that we must think carefully and critically about the composition of our societies. Is this discourse of atomisation really who we are, or are we currently experiencing a collective identity crisis on a global scale? What is past is prologue only if we continue to accept the divisive narrative of neoliberalism that positions us in a Hobbesian all-against-all battle. Such conflict reduces each of us to the lowest common denominator rather than accepting that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Together we are more powerful than any discourse. Neoliberalism will be short-lived if we start prefiguring its demise and insisting upon its death. The suppressed hunger for social change cannot last. It will not last. The future is ours for the taking. Neoliberalism is next of kin to chaos, but human potential is far greater than the pandemonium of this discordance. Instead of a ruthless tale of the search for prosperity that thrives on competition and mass division, we can tell an alternative story. We are the tools of our own oppression, and it is up to all of us to change the apparatus. Let's sweep away these old myths that perpetuate our separation from each other and confuse us into believing that competition can ever serve as a viable substitute for connectedness. A new narrative of compassion that is committed to expanding the circle of em-

pathy is paramount in moving us from our current enslavement to neoliberalism towards the heralding of its obliteration. The story of our cooperation is a dagger in the heart of neoliberalism.

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