



Zero Tolerance, Imperialism, Dispossession

Katharyne Mitchell¹

University of Washington, Department of Geography
kmitch@uw.edu

Introduction

Over the past decade there has been a worldwide exportation of the US discourse of ‘zero tolerance’, and the whole panoply of ideological baggage that it carries with it. First identified by Loic Wacquant in *Les Prisons de la Misère* (1999; see also the expanded English edition, 2008), the global movement of this body of thought has subsequently been traced and interrogated by numerous scholars (Smith, 2001; Harcourt, 2001; Wacquant, 2003; Belina and Helms, 2003; Newburn, 2002). In many of its landings it cohered with local ideas and practices to form reputedly common sense rationalities vis-à-vis ‘problematic’ behavior and populations and how best to control them. In recent years these ideas also scaled up from an emphasis on local urban social control to a greater association with global military pacification.

In this commentary I examine some of the material effects and symbolic implications of zero tolerance discourse as it traveled from U.S. cities to other regions during the first decade of the 21st century. While the term has been employed and studied in many different contexts, my aim here is to call attention to two related and important processes that occurred primarily during the tenure of George H. W. Bush's presidency. The first was the intensified blurring of the conventional distinction between crime and war (See: Bigo, 2005; Krask, 2001; Lutterbeck, 2004). This blurring of boundaries is not new, but is a good indicator of increasing imperial practices and relationships. In the US case, during the Bush



¹ Creative Commons licence: Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works

years, the discourse of chaos on local city streets and the corresponding creation of authoritarian ‘zero tolerance’ policing technologies to control those spaces and populations, also became a rhetoric of military pacification with respect to the chaotic spaces of Iraq and Afghanistan. I'm interested in the ways that the movement of this type of phrase across scales reflects a blurring of crime-war distinctions that is often evident during moments of intensified imperialism.

Second, law and order discourses such as ‘zero tolerance’ tend to link specific, geographically bounded populations to disorderly and insecure spaces in need of stronger authoritarian intervention. The language of spatial insecurity can then be used to justify the economic dispossession of these supposedly disorderly populations. In the law and order rhetoric of zero tolerance that was employed in New York City during the 1990s, the populations most likely to be targeted as disorderly were those perceived as racially different from the governing administration; these were primarily African-Americans, but also Latinos and other immigrants. In this essay I suggest that widespread economic dispossession was justified in Iraq through a similar association of racial difference with US (in)security.

Crime is widely represented as a local policing problem, whereas the invocation of *security* facilitates bringing in the military arm of the state. A security emphasis can be particularly effective in contemporary imperialist projects because of the notion that populations and spaces in need of outside control are violent, risky, threatening, and financially and territorially insecure (Gregory, 2004). Previous discursive justifications for imperial enterprises included cultural arguments about the nature of subjected populations--that they were variously infantile, unreasoning, uneducated, uncivilized and unproductive (Mehta, 1999). Interestingly, both of these imperial discourses rely on the production of racial formations that create and also rework existing ideologies of cultural inferiority and danger.

In this essay I briefly historicize ‘zero tolerance’ forms of social control, emphasizing its racial subtext. I suggest that in recent years, especially during the Bush administration, the discursive rhetoric of zero tolerance scaled up from a primarily urban emphasis to broader imperial concerns with territorial risk. Further, the linking of territorial risk and insecurity with specific populations aided both in the blurring of crime and war, and also in the economic dispossession of those same populations. As an intervention piece my arguments are primarily theoretical and polemical, however I do illustrate some of these ideas with empirical examples from New York City and Iraq.

Zero Tolerance Begins At Home

The concept of ‘zero tolerance’ is generally associated with a style of crime control in New York City initiated under the mayoral leadership of Rudy Giuliani

between 1993 and 2001 (Newburn and Jones, 2002). It also began to take shape as a major discourse in the field of education around the same time period, and has had equally serious ramifications in that arena (Skiba and Peterson, 1999). The term originated as a component of federal and state drug enforcement practices in the late 1980s, and involved the seizure of property on which any amount of drugs was found. Within a short period of time, however, the term and its associated practices began to be applied in multiple situations, from domestic violence to environmental pollution.

In both urban and educational systems of social control and discipline zero tolerance has come to denote a sharp, severe, and highly punitive reaction to any form of behavior deemed illegal, malicious, or anti-social to the surrounding community, even those infractions considered to be relatively minor. With respect to urban policing practices, the kinds of ‘problematic’ behaviors first tackled in New York City were minor forms of misconduct such as pan-handling by squeegee men, prostitution, petty drug dealing, and drinking, urinating or loitering in public (Smith, 1998; Greene, 1999). In public school systems, the idea of zero tolerance discipline was initially called on to punish students who brought firearms to school, but quickly began to include any kind of ‘bad’ behavior, including smoking, drug use, threats, and fighting (Giroux, 2001; Casella, 2003).

The discourse and practice of zero tolerance in urban policing started growing in popularity and in the popular imagination in the early 1990s, after being heralded by Mayor Giuliani as the answer to New York City’s reputed crime problem. Giuliani was elected to the city’s mayoralty largely on a twin platform of improved quality of life through more urban law and order enforcement, alongside the promulgation of ‘new public management’ (NPM)—the idea that government should be restricted in scope and influence in favor of the private sector. These two policy goals operating in tandem produced what Neil Smith has termed a ‘revanchist’ system: authoritarian management combined with a greatly reduced and increasingly privatized system of social aid (Smith, 1998; see also: Weikart, 2001; Vitale, 2008). Although Giuliani was never able to completely carry out his agenda of privatization and welfare reduction, his efforts to ramp up urban law enforcement, target minor misconduct, and harass potential offenders on the city streets had an immediate and intensely negative impact on the city’s African-American and homeless communities (Harcourt, 2001; Reitano, 2006).

The idea of zero tolerance for any kind of crime, including minor so-called quality of life infractions such as public urination, begging or loitering, was given a patina of acceptability by being linked to the ‘broken windows’ thesis, initially formulated by criminologists James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1982. The central argument of this thesis rests on the notion that any kind of disorder that is left unaddressed (such as a broken window), invites further disorder, and that eventually this will lead to an escalation into more serious

crimes. Acting on this thesis, the ‘solution’ to problems of crime and criminality, is to broaden the sphere of what can be constituted as criminal behavior, and then to quickly and harshly stamp it out, sometimes before it has even occurred.² This argument was seized on by a veritable army of researchers and politicians over the following two decades, leading to countless studies, and ultimately to the aggressive zero tolerance social control policies and policing practices of Mayor Giuliani and police commissioner William Bratton.³

The state-directed assault on New York's urban disorder between 1994 and 2001 was reflected in increased policing and anti-homeless laws, and also in higher stop-and-frisk incidents and arrest rates for misdemeanors such as unlicensed vending, panhandling, public drunkenness, and other petty crimes (Fagan and Davies, 2000; Greene, 1999; Rudovsky, 2001, 298; Reitano, 2006). This paralleled a similarly sharp turn towards increasingly harsh ‘get-tough’ penalties for a wider and wider set of student infractions in the New York City public school system. In an early policy move, for example, the mayor transferred control over discipline in the public schools to the police department, opening the way for police surveillance in schools deemed ‘disorderly’ from kindergarten through high school (Williams, 1998, 10). The combination of this increased police presence with stricter rules and regulations, extraordinarily harsh punishments, and limited flexibility for educators and administrators to provide any context for various school infractions, led to increasing numbers of student expulsions, suspensions and incarcerations during Giuliani’s reign, predominantly of poor youth of color (Giroux, 2001).

The link between the discourse and practices of zero tolerance on the streets, in the court system, and in the schools, and the disproportionate expulsion, harassment and incarceration of African-Americans across the US has been documented in numerous empirical studies. Parenti and Gilmore, among others, have researched the disparity in the incarceration of African Americans, who are far more likely than whites to be imprisoned for the same crime, and for longer sentences (Parenti, 1999; Gilmore 2007). And in public education systems, zero tolerance policies have also disproportionately impacted minority youth. Study after study shows that youth of color are more likely than white students to be arrested, waived to adult court, charged with felonies rather than misdemeanors, and have severer punishments and longer sentences meted out to them (Donziger, 1996; Skiba and Peterson, 1999; Casella, 2003; Giroux, 2001; Verdugo, 2002).

² The supposedly ‘predictive’ quality of broken windows garnered by the use of COMPSTAT and other computer-based statistical analyses, often negatively profiles whole neighborhoods, as well as the people who live there. It can lead to a form of spatial profiling with strong racial biases (See e.g.: Rudovsky, 2001).

³ There is a large literature on the history and development of “broken windows policing” and its relationship with punishment and criminal justice in the United States in the 80s and 90s. (For important empirical studies related to the thesis see also: Skogan, 1990; Kelling Coles, 1996; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999, 603-651. An excellent critical overview of these studies and the broken windows thesis itself can be found in Harcourt, 2001.)

Zero tolerance and broken windows rhetoric and practices have clear, racially differentiated impacts on space. One of the most important features to draw out here is the way in which the idea of social and spatial disorder is closely associated with minority neighborhoods and schools, which are stigmatized *a priori* as places of chaos and potentially problematic behavior by virtue of the fact that poor people of color reside in them.⁴ These spaces are targeted for increased police surveillance, which then operates to reinforce their perception as spaces of problematic behavior in a mutually reinforcing cycle.

Not only is racial difference associated with disorderliness and linked with particular places, but this stigmatization is accepted by residents ‘of all races,’ reflecting the impact of hegemonic stereotypes and their power in disciplining subjects through the production of space. Place and race co-define and constitute each other not just as different, but also as dangerous. Of course hegemonic definitions shift and are frequently resisted, co-opted, and reworked, but their power in forming racialized perceptions of populations and spaces can have long-term effects.

At the scale of individuals and populations, the discourse of zero tolerance and broken windows operates to instill fear and at the same time to scold and punish for acts of social incivility. It is a key rhetorical element in the war on crime as well, invoking the military authority of the state in opposition to its own uncivil populations. In these ways, racialized groups living in poor and stigmatized neighborhoods can become seen not just as perpetrators of disorder and criminality, but as enemies of the state as well, a state which will show ‘zero tolerance’ for their real or imagined transgressions (Huq and Muller, 2008; Beckett, 1997; Kraska, 2001).

The direct material ramifications of this kind of domestic militarization is two-fold: the literal physical removal of individuals through continuous harassment and/or incarceration, and the exemption of remaining populations from the liberal protections afforded to most ‘civilized’ members of the community. The blurring of categories, of which the domestic war on crime and drugs and attendant zero tolerance policies of control and punishment are key examples, allows for the creation of state enemies and then the exemption of those populations from the basic civil rights extended to most members of the national community.

New social control practices such as parks exclusion laws, trespass ordinances and other civil statutes banish individuals from city spaces for minor infractions, without due process and sometimes before a crime has even been committed. Furthermore, these place-based expulsions can last for extended

⁴ Numerous studies of urban policing indicate both overtly racist and/or strongly racially inflected attitudes by the police towards specific areas of the city. (See e.g. Herbert, 1997).

periods of time, even for as long as a year. Through practices of evacuation and exemption such as these, the racialized populations of stigmatized urban spaces can be effectively banished from society (Beckett and Herbert, 2009). They are either physically removed on a temporary or semi-permanent basis, and/or they are expelled from the rights and protections of citizenship through their loss of due process in law. Both of these processes of exile work through the mutual constitution of society and space; as specific populations are defined and identified through their anti-social status, they are simultaneously located in and then displaced from specific city parks, streets, and neighborhoods.

Zero tolerance forms of rhetoric and law enforcement were widely promoted and practiced in New York City following the election of Mayor Rudy Giuliani in 1993. The highly punitive component of zero tolerance ideology was made manifest in ‘three strikes and you’re out,’ a baseball metaphor indicating a final endpoint at which further options or chances are unattainable. In the context of law enforcement, a third strike (felony) necessitates long-term incarceration for the defendant, with little contextual information permitted to influence the sentencing. ‘Three strikes’ rulings in New York and across the country, combined with a ramped up war on drugs, increased arrests for minor infractions, and the ‘stop and frisk’ practices adopted by the police, vastly increased the incarceration rates of African-Americans in federal prisons and NYC jails (such as Rikers Island), as well as terrorizing the remaining minority populations, particularly youth of color.⁵

At the same time as this literal and figurative disenfranchisement of over one-third of African-American young men, and increased arrests and frisk rates for immigrants, the homeless, and youth, Mayor Giuliani launched a major urban revitalization campaign targeting mainly poor, minority and immigrant neighborhoods (Delaney, 2001; Freeman, 2006; Smith, 2002; Abu-Lughod, 1995). The use of zero tolerance and broken windows forms of social control aided in the evacuation of minority populations from neighborhoods targeted for state-led redevelopment. Mayor Giuliani’s neighborhood ‘revitalization’ agenda was also evident in multiple public-private partnerships, redevelopment projects and the expansion of business improvement districts (BIDs) that were initiated across the city during his tenure in office.

⁵ For national-level statistics on the increased incarceration rates of African Americans, see Gilmore, 2007. For statistics on racial disparities in NYC marijuana arrests see Golub, Johnson, and Dunlap, 2007. With respect to the disproportionate stopping and frisking of young men of color in both minority and predominantly white neighborhoods in NYC see Rudovsky, 2001; Fagan and Davies, 2000. For a discussion of the brutal treatment of the homeless and mentally ill during Giuliani’s tenure as mayor, see Barr, 2001. Jails such as Riker’s Island became so over-populated with inmates during Giuliani’s reign, that an 800-person ‘barge,’ the Vernon C. Bain Correctional Center, was set up in the East River to accommodate the extra prisoners. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vernon_C._Bain_Correctional_Center.

Zero Tolerance Travels Abroad

The rhetorical mix of law and order and revenge and punishment in zero tolerance doctrine traveled widely through the 1990s. Through lectures, conferences, think tanks, and the self-promotion of players such as Giuliani and Bratton, it quickly made its way around the globe. Numerous widely disparate metropolitan areas from Dublin to Sao Paulo, Barcelona, Bremen, Oslo, Vienna, and Stockholm became subject to the ideas, if not always the practices, associated with zero tolerance forms of urban discipline (Smith 2001).

In investigating cross-Atlantic policy transfer between the US and the U.K., Jones and Newburn found that the harsh symbolic indicators of state power and toughness traveled more readily than the actual policy practices themselves. In terms of policing and social control, the New York strategies of cracking down on minor offenses, harassing potential suspects, and heavily punishing quality of life crimes such as public drunkenness or graffiti, never took hold in a major way in most UK cities. However, at the level of symbolic rhetoric, the ideas and symbolic codes of zero tolerance were tremendously influential (Jones and Newburn, 2007).

Looking at social control policy in Latin America, Loic Wacquant traced the early movement and incorporation of zero tolerance in Brazil as part of a broad strategy of controlling and penalizing the poor in the wake of the decline of social welfarism and the rise of unpopular and polarizing market reforms. His emphasis on the articulation of 'hyper' penalty and the global advancement of neoliberalism has been echoed by others, who explain the rise of tough new urban social control mechanisms with reference to the declining welfare state, increasing immiseration of society, and necessity to contain and quash any potential upheaval these changes might galvanize (Wacquant, 1999; 2003).

Wacquant's research provides additional evidence that the symbolic meanings and economic effects of zero tolerance discourse disproportionately implicate poor and racialized populations worldwide, just as they did in New York City. And as in New York, one of the primary mechanisms through which these meanings gain traction is through the discourse of danger, particularly the danger of disorderly spaces and the unruly populations who inhabit them. More importantly, perhaps, the current invocations of the dangers of ungoverned space have shifted scale from what was primarily an urban narrative of petty criminality, to a much vaster terrain of global territorial insecurity. And like the New York example, the economic implications of this discourse for the dispossession of marginalized communities worldwide are enormous.

What has been changing over the past decade is the scale on which these forms of rhetoric play out, the assessment and propagation of a now globalised insecurity that is widely deployed, and the transnational financial and security industry technologies that are called on to implement zero tolerance type rationales

and practices. Zero tolerance is no longer primarily an urban affair; it is now part of a global management of present and future unease, of ‘monitoring the future’ by naming and defining the status of disorderly populations and their respective living spaces, and by removing or exempting them from both society and space, often before a ‘crime’ has even occurred (Bigo, 2005, 21; see also: Mitchell, 2009).

Following the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington D.C. in 2001, and in London in 2005, the zero tolerance rhetorical emphasis subtly shifted from one focused on urban law and order to one highlighting questions of larger scale security. This scale shift from local crime control to regional safety utilized two major rhetorical deployments: a widely promulgated anxiety related to physical insecurity—embodied largely through the fear of the African-American, Muslim, Palestinian, or immigrant as terrorist figure (Huq and Muller, 2008; Huq, 2007; Harcourt, 2007; Ngai, 2004; Gregory, 2004); and second, a fear of financial insecurity—identified with the loss of surplus value connected with a curtailed or non-expanding production of space.⁶ This latter fear is frequently interlocked with the former and extended through a generalized anxiety about the loss of value (associated with bad bond ratings, corruption, declining tourism, poor real estate markets, etc.) brought about by the presence of disorderly, unproductive, corrupt, and now *dangerous* bodies in profit-producing spaces.

Recent emphases on the fear of increasingly insecure populations and spaces have transformed from an anxiety about uncivil behavior and loss of local property value, to a fear of being kidnapped or blown up, combined with a dread of total financial collapse. As this discursive construction morphs through time and travels across space it creates a form of *global* insecurity, an unease often “characterized by three criteria: practices of exceptionalism, acts of profiling and containing foreigners, and a normative imperative of mobility” (Bigo, 2005).⁷ The contemporary invocation of zero tolerance is just one of many discursive axes creating this mood of global territorial insecurity. As part of a broader hegemonic project to both reassert authoritarian control by global elites, and to accumulate resources through dispossession it functions through the invocation of threat, and

⁶ The second fear and its attendant “zero tolerance” message is often associated with corruption in government and financial circles. Globally perceived corruption is worrisome for state actors as it runs the risk of lowering credit ratings and/or inviting in systems of global financial surveillance. Not coincidentally, the governments that are most frequently compelled to make strong pronouncements of zero tolerance for corruption are those perceived to be just outside the “normal” global economic community. For just a few recent titles monitored by the BBC see, “Albanian premier declares ‘zero tolerance’ on corruption in government;” “Croatian government ‘has zero tolerance for corruption’- minister;” “Macedonian PM stresses VMRO-DPMNE’s ‘zero tolerance’ for corruption;” and Namibia anti-graft czar says watchdog to pursue ‘policy of zero tolerance’”.

⁷ The first two of the criteria outlined by Bigo primarily involve racialised populations. Exceptionalism is the notion of certain populations being exempted from the protections of the law; the profiling and containment of foreigners generally implicates immigrants or others such as Muslims, who are coded as non-native in most western societies, and frequently monitored and/or held in deportation centers.

the assurance of a knowing expertise and punitive follow-through in dealing with that threat.

Just three months prior to the invasion of Iraq, for example, the US National security adviser, Condoleeza Rice, told Fox News Sunday that “we have to have a zero-tolerance view of the Iraqi regime this time.” This announcement followed an arms inspection resolution adopted by the United Nations. She went on to add, “The next material breach by Saddam Hussein has got to have serious consequences. I think it’s pretty clear what that may mean. The (US) president has made no secret of the fact that he intends to use force if the Iraqis cannot be brought into a compliance in other ways” (Mikkelsen, 2002). White House press secretary Ari Fleischer made similar statements in a separate press conference, saying, “We will have zero tolerance for any violations of a U.N. resolution” (USA Today, 2002). Likewise, President Bush himself used the same phrase when pressed on what would constitute a ‘material breach’ of the U.N. resolution and possibly lead to war: “Zero-tolerance is about as plain as I can make it. We will not tolerate any deception or denial or deceit” (Schweid, 2002). The multiple public invocations of “zero tolerance” towards the Iraqi regime in late 2002 were accompanied by warnings of dire global security threats, such as the now infamous, “weapons of mass destruction.” Numerous other technologies were employed in the United States at this time to stoke up a sense of fear and unease, including a system of color-coded ‘warnings’ of terrorist threat levels, as well as frequent use of words such as terror, terrorism, and terrorist in presidential and other public addresses by political figures. At the same time, strong statements such as that by security adviser Rice, above, about the likely and legitimate use of pre-emptive state force to control Hussein’s threatening behavior, became increasingly commonplace in the run-up to the war.

Zero tolerance rhetoric towards Hussein, along with the repeated incantation of the US state’s right to use violence to control his unacceptable behavior, was deployed alongside a constant promotional undercurrent of territorial insecurity. Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein was almost universally depicted in the media and in popular culture as uncivilized, irrational, and subhuman (Merskin, 2005). These images tapped into older anti-Arab stereotypes such as those identified by Jack Shaheen in research on the characterizations of Arabs in 1980s US television shows. Shaheen (1984) documented the predominance of four myths, of which the uncultured barbarian and the ruthless Arab terrorist were foremost (see also: Schrag and Javidi, 1995; Palmer, 1995; Hashem, 1995). In a broad analysis of the US media and depictions of the Middle East following the first Gulf War in 1991, Artz and Pollock (1995) noted as well how these types of highly racialized characterizations were ubiquitous in cartoons, headlines, and news articles about Saddam Hussein. They argued further that the types of prejudicial allusions in the media about Arabs in general provided the cultural rationale necessary for popular support of the war.

The commonplaces and cultural allusions chosen in depicting Saddam Hussein as uncivilized and dangerous resided as much in the culture as in the verbal and visual images. The villain—labeled by George Bush, described by the news media, and drawn by political cartoonists—was authorized by the deep-seated cultural prejudice of the population. Once activated, the anti-Arab prejudice provided the suppressed enthymematic premises necessary for US intervention in the Persian Gulf (125).

The depiction of Arab populations as abnormal and treacherous in both Gulf Wars reflects a long history of western responses to and representations of Middle Eastern populations and cultures (Said, 1979; Gregory, 2004; Hamada, 2001). As Sparke (2007) points out, these longstanding cultural and geopolitical fears (greatly exacerbated after 2001 by the false connections of Al Qaeda to specific Middle East territories such as Iraq) were linked by US politicians to the geoeconomic hopes of extending free market capitalism to these same populations and regions. While rarely used as a direct justification for the Iraq War itself, the fomentation of a politics of regional insecurity, juxtaposed with the possibility of greater *laissez-faire* economic integration in Iraq in the future, was a clear strategy and policy goal for many politicians and war strategists.⁸

As with the case of New York City, the repercussions of this broad strategy of zero tolerance type language and practices were experienced negatively for many of the poorer civilians in Iraq. In addition to the execution of Hussein, the IBC database has documented between 90,329 and 98,605 civilian deaths between the beginning of the war in 2003 and January 2, 2009 (Iraq Body Count). These deaths were accompanied by widespread looting that began after the fall of Hussein's regime, including of most of the government ministries, several hospitals, schools, and food distribution centers, power plants and other urban and rural infrastructure, as well as the Baghdad archaeological museum. Overall, the looting of these assets and resources, particularly in the oil industry, represents a massive nation-wide dispossession of public goods that has led to extremely desperate conditions for large sectors of the population (Klein, 2008). Following the initial invasion, all final decision-making over the oil sector was made by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), with budgetary decisions and voting rights controlled by the pro-consul and coalition institutions (Le Billon, 2005). According to Whyte, the scale and intensity of oil revenue appropriation by coalition forces through bid rigging, false claims, embezzlement, and other forms of corruption was unprecedented, and took place alongside major violations of international law (2007).

⁸ For insightful analyses of this kind of strategic articulation see the essays in Artz, and Y. Kamalipour, 2005.

In addition to coalition control of the oil industry, the nearly total razing and looting of the country's public infrastructure provided a massive vacuum and ensuing economic opportunity for global corporations involved in both security and reconstruction. These corporations benefited from a coalition push to privatize the public sector and open up the economy to market forces. Le Billon wrote of this process, "Reconstruction policy was similarly driven from Washington and the CPA office and based on a strong pro-market ideology emphasizing the need for immediate and widespread privatization (leaving aside the oil sector), as well as free trade and lax foreign direct investment rules" (2005, 695; see also: Klein, 2004; Harvey, 2006).

Numerous scholarly and journalistic accounts have documented the huge profits and overwhelming corruption in Iraqi business operations by global reconstruction corporations such as Bechtel and Halliburton (Chatterjee, 2004; Bello, 2006; Whyte, 2007). Others have noted the ubiquity of global contracting in areas such as operational support for technology systems, and the training of Iraqi police, in addition to the huge growth of private security contractors "that support weapons systems, provide logistics, provide advice and training, site security, and policing services to states and non-state actors (Avant, 2004, 153; see also: Singer, 2007; Bjork and Jones, 2005). Still others have examined the indirect ramifications of dispossession and accumulation in unlikely areas such as insurance protection.

How was this massive and ongoing process of local dispossession and global accumulation allowed? Imperial control and dispossession is legitimated, in part, through the use of age-old racial tropes, in this case those foregrounding physical, financial, and spatial insecurity. In addition to the depiction of the Arab as barbarian or terrorist, the Orientalist trope of the Arab street as chaotic and insecure has a similarly long history (See, e.g.: Mitchell, 1991; Wright, 1991). In current wartime representations, the chaos and insecurity of the city street is scaled up to embrace the territory of the entire Iraqi nation and many of its Middle East neighbors. This scaling up is manifested in many of President Bush's speeches on Iraq, often yoked to the events of September 11th 2001, and linked with threats to territorial security at home. For example, in a speech given at the American Enterprise Institute in February, 2003, just prior to the US invasion, President Bush said,

On a September morning, threats that had gathered for years, in secret and far away, led to murder in our country on a massive scale. As a result, we must look at security in a new way, because our country is a battlefield in the first war of the 21st century... In Iraq, a dictator is building and hiding weapons that could enable him to dominate the Middle East and intimidate the civilized world and we will not allow it... The safety of the American people depends on ending this direct and growing threat... America's interests in security, and America's

belief in liberty, both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq.

After one year of US forces occupying Iraq, Bush (2004) continued to invoke insecurity in Iraq and the US in a similar vein: “The terrorists’ only influence is violence, and their only agenda is death... By removing a source of terrorist violence and instability in the Middle East, we also make our own country more secure.” Following three years of fighting in Iraq, he noted the continuation of chaos in another speech, “There will be more tough fighting and more days of struggle and we will see more images of chaos and carnage in the days to come” (Bush, 2006). After five years of US occupation in Iraq, Bush (2008) persisted in his depiction of a nation on the precipice of unmitigated violence, but remaining in control by virtue of the American presence,

A little over a year ago, the fight in Iraq was faltering. Extremist elements were succeeding in their efforts to plunge Iraq into chaos. My administration understood that America could not retreat in the face of terror. And we knew that if we did not act, the violence that had been consuming Iraq would worsen, and spread, and could eventually reach genocidal levels.”

The spaces of Iraq, from the city to the nation, were thus represented and perceived through time as not just incoherent, but also as inherently violent and dangerous—spaces clearly in need of constant surveillance and management. Moreover, the language in these speeches depicts both ‘chaos and carnage’ in the present, but also the continual specter of violence in the future. The symbolic rhetoric of ‘zero tolerance’ spoken by the president and others just prior to the US invasion, both initiated and predetermined these images of violent and uncivilized behavior and thus paved the way for the necessary and legitimate use of state force in these disorderly and dangerous territories.

In addition, the language of ‘broken windows’ was also deployed in relation to Iraq by military advisers and think tanks as well as on popular blogs related to policing and national security. For example, a monograph by Robert Gordon (2006) of the School of Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth, was entitled *The Iraqi Police Service and COMPSTAT: Applying the NYPD Crime Control Model to Restore Public Order in Iraq*. In this work, the author wrote of pre-1994 New York as a city “plagued by... fear and disorder,” where “disorder emanated from a loss of control of public spaces to criminal elements.” According to the author, the ideas brought in by Police Commissioner Bratton in 1994, based on the “‘Broken Windows Theory’... that specifically related public order and serious crime,” helped to transform the city into a model of effective spatial administration (21; for a more extensive discussion of this monograph, see: Mitchell, 2010). He went on to advocate the reorganization of policing in Iraq on the basis of New York’s ‘broken windows policing’ system that brought in constant

surveillance, monitoring, assessment and accountability to the police and the entire policing system.

Between 2003 and 2008 a number of on-line forums also posted blogs which linked broken windows policing with security issues in Iraq. One from “Danger Room: What’s Next in National Security,” begins, “In the 1990s police in New York City launched a strategy to fight crime by cracking down on minor violations such as broken windows. The idea was to jump-start a little local civic pride, giving neighborhoods the confidence to police themselves. By some accounts, it worked. Now the same things (sic) is happening in Iraq, only the ‘criminals’ are actually insurgents” (Axe, 2008).

In Iraq, the imperialist justification and imperative associated with the phrase becomes one of providing planning and order to the broken windows of disorderly populations and places, now scaled up and associated with the dangerous and disconnected spaces of misgoverned societies. The conflation of scales and categories stretches on from here to encompass identities, practices, and time: e.g. the conflation of the ghetto or Palestinian youth and the terrorist; the conflation of policing and war; and the conflation of past, present, and future. Bigo (2001) writes of these contemporary illusions,

Like the panopticon *dispositif*, this banopticon *dispositif* of morphing produces a knowledge, and produces statements on threats and on security that reinforces the belief in a capacity to decrypt, even prior to the individual himself, what its trajectories, its itineraries will be. This *dispositif* depends on the control of stocks in a territory. It depends on ‘monitoring the future’ as in the Philip K Dick novel ‘minority report’ more than the surveillance of the present in accordance to the official past. It is a management at a distance in space and time of the ‘abnormals.’... A skin color, an accent, an attitude and one is slotted, extracted from the unmarked masses, and evacuated if necessary (21).

Broken windows, broken territories, and the global racialization of risk all morph together in imperialist practices of control. According to Bigo, the promotion of a radicalized sense of global threat and fear produces the perceived necessity for new kinds of ‘expert’ security apparatuses and partnerships to translate and decode potentially in-secure bodies and spaces traveling across ‘translocal’ space. The new in-security emphasis also facilitates a scale slippage between the local and the global, and the possibility (and perceived necessity) of managing all ‘abnormal’ bodies and spaces ‘at a distance.’ The indeterminacy between the local and global management of bodies in space enhances the opportunity for shaping and mobilizing public fear, and for blurring the categories of crime and war. The resulting exile of ‘intolerably risky communities’ opens up the potential for new counterterrorist pacification strategies and new forms of territorial and capital integration and accumulation through dispossession.

References

- ABC Online. 2006. Bush urges patience amid Iraq "chaos." March 14. Available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200603/s1590776.htm> (Last accessed January 28, 2009).
- Abu-Lughod, Janet. 1995. *From Urban Village to East Village: The battle for New York's lower east side*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Artz, Lee Wigle and Mark A. Pollock. 1995. Limiting the options: Anti-Arab images in US media coverage of the Persian Gulf crisis. In, Lee Artz & Yahya R. Kamalipour (eds.), *The US Media and the Middle East: Image and perception*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Artz, Lee, and Yahya R. Kamalipour. 2005. *Bring 'em on: media and politics in the Iraq War*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Avant, Deborah. 2004. "The privatization of security and change in the control of force. *International Studies Perspectives*. 5(2), 153-157.
- Axe, David. 2008. 'Broken windows' policing in Iraq. *Wired Blog Network: Danger Room* weblog, January. Available at <http://blog.wired.com/defense/2008/01/broken-windows.html> (Last accessed January 30, 2009).
- Barr, Heather. 2001. Policing madness. In, Andrea McArdle and Tanya Ezran (eds.), *Zero Tolerance: quality of life and the new police brutality in New York City* New York: New York University Press, 19-49.
- Beckett, Katherine. 1997. *Making Crime Pay: Law and order in contemporary American politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beckett, Katherine and Herbert, Steven. 2009. *Banished*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Belina, Bernd, and Gesa Helms. 2003. Zero tolerance for the industrial past and other threats: Policing and urban entrepreneurialism in Britain and Germany. *Urban Studies*. 40(9), 1845-1867.
- Bello, Walden. 2006. The rise of the relief-and-reconstruction complex. *Journal of International Affairs*. 59(2), 281-96.
- Bigo, Didier. 2005. Globalized (in)security: The field of the professionals of unease management and the Ban-opticon. In, Jon Solomon & Naoki Sakai

- (eds.), *Translation, philosophy, colonial difference*. Traces Ser. Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 109-157.
- Bjork, Kjell and Richard Jones. 2005. Overcoming dilemmas created by the 21st century mercenaries: conceptualising the use of private security companies in Iraq. *Third World Quarterly*. 26, 777-796.
- Bush, George W. 2008. On the war in Iraq after 5 years. Speech given at the Pentagon, Arlington, VA, March 19.
- Bush, George W. 2004. 5 step plan for democracy in Iraq. Speech presented at US Army War College, Carlisle, PA. May 24.
- Bush, George W. 2003. Speech to the American Enterprise Institute, presented at Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C., February 26. Available at: <http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=663> (Last accessed January 27, 2009.)
- Casella, Ronnie. 2003. Zero tolerance policy in schools: Rationale, consequences, and alternatives. *Teachers College Record*. 105(5), 872-92.
- Chatterjee, Pratap. 2004. *Iraq, Inc.: a profitable occupation*. New York: Seven Stories.
- Delaney, Samuel R. 2001. *Times Square Red: Times square blue*. New York: New York University Press.
- Donziger, Steven R. 1996. *The Real War on Crime: The report of the national criminal justice commission*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Fagan, Jeffrey, and Garth Davies. 2000. Street stops and broken windows: Terry {Terry v. Ohio, 88 S. Ct. 1868 (1968)}, race, and disorder in New York City. *Fordham Urban Law Journal*. 28(2), 457-504.
- Freeman, Lance. 2006. *There Goes the 'Hood*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Gilmore, Ruth Wilson. 2007. *Golden Gulag: Prisons, surplus, crisis and opposition in globalizing California crossroads*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giroux, Henry A. 2001. Mis/Education and zero tolerance: Disposable youth and the politics of domestic militarization. *Boundary 2*. 28(3), 61-94.

- Golub, Andrew, Bruce D Johnson and Eloise Dunlap. 2007. The race/ethnicity disparity in misdemeanor marijuana arrests in New York City. *Criminology & Public Policy*. 6(1), 131.
- Gordon, Robert E. 2006. *The Iraqi Police Service and CompStat: Applying the NYPD crime control model to restore public order in Iraq*. Fort Leavenworth School of Advanced Military Studies.
- Greene, Judith A. 1999. Zero tolerance: A case study of police policies and practices in New York City. *Crime & Delinquency*. 45(2), 171-187.
- Gregory, Derek. 2004. *The colonial present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hamada, Basyouni Ibrahim. 2001. The Arab image in the minds of western image-makers. *Journal of International Communication*. 7(1), 7-35
- Harcourt, Bernard E. 2007. Muslim profiles post-9/11: Is racial profiling an effective counterterrorist measure and does it violate the right to be free from discrimination? In, Benjamin J Gould & Liora Lazarus (eds.), *Security and human rights*. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 73-98.
- Harcourt, Bernard E. 2001. *Illusion of order: the false promise of broken windows policing*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Harvey David. 2006. Neo-liberalism as creative destruction. *Geografiska Annaler, Series B: Human Geography*. 88(2), 145-158.
- Hashem, Mahlboub. 1995. Coverage of Arabs in two leading US news-magazines: *Time and Newsweek*. In, Lee Artz & Yahya R. Kamalipour (eds.), *The US Media and the Middle East: Image and perception*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 151-162.
- Herbert, Steven. 1997. *Policing Space: Territoriality and the Los Angeles Police Department*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Huq, Aziz. 2007. The new counterterrorism: Investigating terror, investigating Muslims. In, Richard C. Leone & Gregory Anriq (eds.), *Liberty under Attack: Reclaiming our freedoms in an age of terror* eds. New York: Public Affairs, The Century Foundation, 167-186.
- Huq, Aziz and Christopher Muller. 2008. The war on crime as precursor to the war on terror. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*. 36(4), 215-229.

- Jones, Trevor and Tim Newburn. 2007. *Policy Transfer and Criminal Justice*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Iraq Body Count. 2009. Iraq Body Count Project
<http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/> (Last accessed January 15, 2009.)
- Kelling, George and Catherine Coles. 1996. *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring order and reducing crime in our communities*. New York: Free Press.
- Klein, Naomi. 2004. Report - BAGHDAD YEAR ZERO - Pillaging Iraq in pursuit of a neocon utopia. *Harper's*. 43.
- Klein, Naomi. 2008. *The shock doctrine: the rise of disaster capitalism*. New York: Picador.
- Kraska, Peter B. 2001. *Militarizing the American criminal justice system: the changing roles of the Armed Forces and the police*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Le Billon, Philippe. 2005. Corruption, reconstruction and oil governance in Iraq". *Third World Quarterly*. 26(4/5), 685-703.
- Lutterbeck, Derek. 2004. Between police and military: The new security agenda and the rise of gendarmeries. *Cooperation and Conflict*. 39(1), 45-68.
- Mamdani, Mahomood. 2004. *Good Muslim, bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the roots of terror*. New York: Pantheon Press.
- Mehta, Uday Singh. 1999. *Liberalism and empire: a study in nineteenth-century British liberal thought*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Merskin, Debra. 2005. The construction of Arabs as enemies: Post-9/11 discourse of George W. Bush. In, Lee Artz & Yahya R. Kamalipour (eds.), *Bring 'em On: Media and politics in the Iraq War*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 121-137.
- Mikkelsen, Randall. 2002. Iraq faces 'zero tolerance' on inspections, US says. *PlanetArk World Environmental News*. November 12.
- Mitchell, Katharyne. 2009. Pre-Black futures. *Antipode*. 41(Supplement), 239-261.
- Mitchell, Katharyne. 2010. Ungoverned space: global security and the geopolitics of broken windows. *Political Geography*. 29, 289-297

- Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. *Colonizing Egypt*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Newburn, Tim and Trevor Jones. 2007. Symbolizing crime control: Reflections on Zero Tolerance. *Theoretical Criminology*. 11(2), 221-243.
- Newburn, Tim. 2002. Atlantic crossings: 'Policy transfer' and crime control in the USA and Britain. *Punishment & Society*. 4(2), 165-194.
- Ngai, Mai M. 2004. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal aliens and the making of modern America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Palmer, Allen W. 1995. The Arab image in newspaper political cartoons. In, Lee Artz & Yahya R. Kamalipour (eds.), *The US Media and the Middle East: Image and perception*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 139-150
- Parenti, Christian. 1999. *Lockdown America: Police and prisons in the age of crisis*. London, Verso.
- Reitano, Joanne R. 2006. *The Restless City: A short history of New York from colonial times to the present*. New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Rudovsky, David. 2001. Law enforcement by stereotypes and serendipity: Racial profiling and stops and searches without cause. *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law*. 3, 298.
- Said, Edward. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Press.
- Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 1999. Systematic social observation of public spaces: a new look at disorder in urban neighborhoods. *American Journal of Sociology*. 105(3), 603-51.
- Schrag, Robert and Manoocher N. Javidi. 1995. Through a glass darkly: American media images of Middle Eastern cultures and their potential impact on young children. In, Lee Artz & Yahya R. Kamalipour (eds.), *The US Media and the Middle East: Image and perception*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 212-221;
- Schweid, Barry. 2002. Bush warns of zero-tolerance. *The Seattle Times*. November 13.
- Shaheen, Jack G. 1984. *The TV Arab*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
- Singer, P. W. 2008. *Corporate warriors: the rise of the privatized military industry*.

- Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Skiba, Russell J. and Reece L. Peterson. 1999. The dark side of zero tolerance: can punishment lead to safe schools? *Phi Delta Kappan*. 80(5), 372-6+.
- Skogan, Wesley. 1990. *Disorder and Decline: Crime and the spiral decay in American neighborhoods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Neil. 2002. New globalism, new urbanism: Gentrification as global urban strategy. In, Neil Brenner & Nikolas Theodore (eds.), *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban restructuring in North America*. Oxford: Blackwell Publications, 80-103.
- Smith, Neil. 2001. Global social cleansing: Postliberal revanchism and the export of zero tolerance. *Social Justice*. 28(3), 68-74.
- Smith, Neil. 1998. Giuliani time: The revanchist 1990s. *Social Text*. 16(4), 1.
- Sparke, Matthew. 2007. Geopolitical fears, geoeconomic hopes, and the responsibilities of geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 97(2), 338-349.
- USA Today. 2002. Bush plans 'zero tolerance' for Saddam. 21 October. See, http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2002-10-21-bush-saddam_x.htm (Last accessed January 12, 2009).
- Verdugo, Richard R. 2002. Race-Ethnicity, social class, and zero-tolerance policies: The cultural and structural wars. *Education and Urban Society*. 35(1), 50-75.
- Vitale, Alex S. 2008. *City of Disorder: How the quality of life campaign transformed New York politics*. New York: New York University Press.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 2008. *Prisons of Poverty*. Contradictions Ser. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 2003. "Toward a dictatorship over the poor?: Notes on the penalization of poverty in Brazil". *Punishment & Society*. 5 (2), 197-205.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 1999. *Les prisons de la misère*. Paris: Raisons d'agir.
- Weikart, Lynne A. 2001. The Giuliani administration and the New Public Management in New York City". *Urban Affairs Review*. 36(3), 359-381.

Williams, Patricia J. 1998. An American litany. *Nation*. 267(11), 10.

Whyte, Dave. 2007. The crimes of neo-liberal rule in occupied Iraq. *The British Journal of Criminology*. 47(2), 177-195.

Wright, G. 1991. *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.