MASCULINITY AND VIOLENCE IN THE BRITISH MILITARY: LIBERAL WARRIORS AND HAUNTED SOLDIERS

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ABSTRACT

**Masculinity and Violence in the British Military:
Liberal Warriors and Haunted Soldiers**

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Over the past decade British troops have been stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan as part of what was previously called the 'war on terror'. During this period reports have emerged of British soldiers engaging in sexual abuse against local detainees, the killing of innocent Iraqi and Afghan civilians, and the use of banned techniques during interrogations. At the same time, widely televised repatriations of dead and injured soldiers have taken place, and a combination of the proliferation in use of improvised explosive devices by enemy forces and improvements in battlefield medicine has meant increasing numbers of soldiers are returning home with limbs missing and permanent disfigurement. It is unpacking how these specific acts of wartime violence have become possible that this thesis is concerned with. Specifically, this project will ask questions about the relation between contemporary constructions of British militarised masculinity – what I call a 'liberal warrior' – and the enactment of wartime violence.

At its core, this thesis will argue that a liberal warrior subjectivity will never be stable or 'complete', and that it is in its precariousness and attempts at stabilisation that specific militarised violences become possible. Building on a burgeoning feminist literature on militarised masculinities and appropriating Avery Gordon's epistemology of ghosts and hauntings, I detail a way of conceptualising a militarised masculine liberal warrior that avoids mapping 'hard' and 'fixed' borders. Constituted through gendered discourses and hierarchical gendered binaries, boundaries are marked around a liberal warrior that excludes traits and characteristics a liberal warrior is *not*. However, those traits and characteristics that a liberal warrior has attempted to expel remain an integral constituting part of what is included, *haunting* the subjectivity, and destabilising its attempts at coherent representation. I argue it is through the appearances of *ghosts* – the concrete materialisation of an aspect of a haunting – that notice can be given to the ever-presence of hauntings.

Focusing specifically on attempts at expelling – exorcising – hauntings of (homo)sexual potential, uncontrollability, colonial desires and fears, and the brutality of warfare in the (re)construction of a liberal warrior, the thesis pays attention to the materialisations of ghosts across multiple sites, including basic training, barrack living and during a tour of duty. Emerging as the banal and mundane, and also as spectacular wartime violence, recognising these materialisations as ghosts has several effects. It draws attention to the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior and always already haunting presences, it allows the conceptual space between everyday soldiering 'doings' and the spectacularly violent to be bridged, and it reveals the ways in which attempts at expelling hauntings and (re)articulating the borders of a liberal warrior makes these (sometimes violent) appearances of ghosts possible.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other institute of learning.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

DEDICATION

To my family now – Mum, Dad, Michael and Alice – and Matthew, my family future.

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who have been such dear friends these last few years, and who have been integral players in a year where a lot of Big Life Stuff happened. Thanks to the Ladies of Fairhaven – Jo, Ley and Alex – for getting me through the first year of the PhD when Matthew was away. And thanks to those in Chorlton who have provided chats, dinners, wine, and friendship; in particular, to Sally and James, Lucy and Fran, Sarah and Kenny, John Date (extra thanks for fixing my laptop on more than one occasion), and Luke Sullivan.

And through it all there has been Matthew. Having just written over 70,000 words I find myself incapable of putting into words the positive effect you have had on my life, this project, and me. To say thank you seems to do it, and you, a disservice, so instead I shall leave it to someone far more romantic than I, and hope that you just know.

> *And I in these lines say:*
> *Like this I want you, love,*
> *love, Like this I love you,*
> *as you dress*
> *and how your hair lifts up*
> *and how your mouth smiles,*
> *light as the water of the spring upon the pure stones,*
> *Like this I love you, beloved.*
>
> - Pablo Neruda, 'And because Love battles'

The Author

Julia Welland completed her undergraduate degree in Politics with International Relations in 2007 at The University of Manchester and, also at The University of Manchester, her Masters in International Relations in 2009. This thesis is her first substantive research project.

INTRODUCTION

MILITARISED VIOLENCES AND 'FEMINIST CURIOSITY'

Sandra Whitworth opens her 2004 book on Canadian peacekeepers' violence with the statement, "There is probably nothing more annoying than a contradiction" (2004: 1). The contradiction Whitworth is referring to is being, quite literally, rescued (with tears in her eyes) by members of Canada's armed forces. After a severe two-week ice storm in eastern Ontario and western Québec, Whitworth's home had been left without power, water, heat and phone. The Canadian soldiers cleared ice from her roof, chopped wood and "otherwise contribute[d] to my family's and community's safety" (*ibid.*: 1). It was this opening paragraph, this statement of contradiction, which I recalled during my fieldwork at Catterick Infantry Barracks in South Yorkshire: the home of infantry training for the British Army. I recalled it when doors were held open for me, when whole groups of soldiers and officers stood up when I entered a room, and when I was continually referred to as 'miss' or 'ma'am'. (On a superficial level, it is hard to think of a time when I have been awarded more outwardly displayed respect by a group of men I have just met.) I recalled it when the Commanding Officer of the regiment made sure I was never hungry, was warm enough (my visit was during a freezing cold February) and sent me back to Manchester with a regimental t-shirt, mug and pencil. And I recalled it during informal chats with officers in the mess who would make me laugh with stories of ridiculous military traditions and talk about their frustrations of army life (one was prevented from going on an Arabic course because his regiment needed him to remain based in the UK, another was having to cancel a skiing trip at short notice due to a change in date of compulsory weapons training). In a few days, British Army soldiers had gone from people I read about in the news and a subjectivity I sought to critically unpack, to people I had actually met and spoken with, to people who were not my friends, but who I had definitely had fun with. If I had needed reminding of the relations we have with those who we study, then my fieldwork certainly served that purpose.

While Whitworth struggled to reconcile the "jovial, decent, and dedicated" soldiers with those she had been studying for a book provisionally titled 'Bullies in Blue Berets'[1] (*ibid.*: 1), I had trouble reconciling these polite, friendly and helpful soldiers and officers with the stories of them I had read in the news. For it was not stories of soldiers' friendliness or sense of humour that had caught my attention. It was those that located soldiers in the role

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[1] It was eventually published as *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping.*

of detainee abuser[2]; as murderer of Iraqi and Afghan civilians[3]; as rapist[4]; and as wife killer[5] – it was stories of their violence. And, like the majority of those who heard such stories, I had trouble even beginning to comprehend how someone – some group of people – could carry out such violence. How so many others could know what was going on and fail to intervene[6]. And that even when such violence came to public attention so few involved seemed to face prosecution[7]. Alongside these stories of troop violence however, were the televised repatriations of dead service personnel, their faces adorning our newspapers, and reports of horrific, life-changing injuries. In the details we hear of their lives through familial connections and statements from those who grieve further contradictions are revealed: soldiers' bodies are not just those that perpetrate violence, they are those that laugh, love, live, and they are subjected to violence. That these seemingly cruel, barbaric and evil soldiers, and brave, funny and selfless soldiers could emerge from the same institution, from the same training processes and from the same conflicts, seemed incomprehensible to me.

Despite this incomprehension, what Cynthia Enloe (2004) would call my 'feminist curiosity', came later, more gradually. It came after I recognised that the questions I was asking – or rather, the questions I *wasn't* asking – remained resolutely within the frames of debate the military itself set. A frame of debate that had not significantly shifted over a decade of the so-called 'war on terror' waged primarily by the US and UK in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a frame of debate that had generated few satisfying answers. A frame of debate where the sovereign, autonomous individual reigned supreme as (ir)rational actor and it was assumed improved "leadership, education and training" would "create the conditions which make the commission of criminal or disgraceful acts less likely" (Aitken 2008:10). A frame of debate where questions of gender and masculinity, and the relations of power,

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[2] For example, the 2004 torture and sexual abuse of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison by American military police officers, and the physical and sexual abuses perpetrated by British troops in Camp Breadbasket, Iraq in 2003 (discussed in my fourth chapter).
[3] For example, the murder of Baha Mousa, a 26-year-old Iraqi hotel receptionist, by British service personnel in 2004 (discussed in my fourth chapter), or the 2012 shooting of sixteen Afghan civilians, including nine children, by a US soldier.
[4] For example, the 2006 gang rape and murder of fourteen-year-old Abeer Qassim Hamza al-Janabi and murder of her family by US servicemen in Mahmudiyah, Iraq.
[5] For example, the 2002 murders of four military wives by their partners at Fort Bragg military base in the US.
[6] The Camp Breadbasket abuse was only investigated after a soldier took a camera film documenting the abuse to a developers back in the UK; the abuse at Abu Ghraib was known about by far more than the seven military police officers who faced prosecution; while the 'whistleblower' in the Mahmudiyah rape and murders confessed to his mental health counsellor, believing he would face a sceptical and unsympathetic army command structure (Zoroya 2006).
[7] The three British soldiers prosecuted in relation to Camp Breadbasket were claimed to be "scapegoats", protecting more senior soldiers who had been involved in the abuse (Gillan 2005). Meanwhile the chairman of the three-year long inquiry into Mousa's death stated a "large number" of soldiers abused Mousa and that many others – again including several officers – must have known what was happening, yet only a handful have faced prosecution (BBC, 13 Sept 2011a).

privilege and violence they emerge through and sustain fail to emerge. This was a frame of debate that was marked by a distinct *lack* of feminist curiosity.

Enloe writes that "[t]he moment when one becomes newly curious about something is also a good time to think about what created one's previous *lack* of curiosity" (2004: 2-3, emphasis in original). What was most surprising about my previous lack of feminist curiosity, my failure to ask questions about gender, was that gender is so visibly and vocally on display within the military otherwise. Gender is on display in the use of Female Engagement Teams in Afghanistan; in the high publicity surrounding the deaths of female soldiers[8]; and in debates surrounding women's exclusion from the frontline of combat[9]. Gender is on display in the language of equality within the military[10], and in the figures of sexual abuse and sexual harassment experienced by female recruits[11]. And gender is on display in Western militaries' shift from war fighting to peacekeeping and nation building, and their concomitant (wo)manpower needs and softening or 'feminising' of language – that of 'hearts and minds' rather than "DESTROY and NEUTRALIZE" (Hennessey 2012: 27). Why gender so adamantly failed to appear in the debates surrounding the violences detailed above therefore deserves attention.

This absence of gender in discussions regarding militarised violences was with the exception of the torture and sexual abuse 'scandal' that took place at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq; a 'scandal' that resulted in the prosecution of seven American military police officers, three of whom were women. As with Enloe's discussion of the photograph of Margaret Thatcher standing alongside other heads of states during the Venice Summit in 1987, it was the faces – or rather the bio-female bodies – of the three women abusers that made "it harder to ignore that the men were men" (Enloe 2000 [1989]: 6). Indeed, it draws our attention to the ways in which gender seems to be only revealed or 'on display' in the military when it is feminine gender. The gender of all-male frontline combat troops is not discussed, nor that of the vast majority of those injured and killed, nor that of the soldiers responsible for the abuses at Camp Breadbasket, the murder of Baha Mousa or the rape of

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[8] 152 American servicewomen (Harris 2013) and seven British servicewomen (*The Telegraph*, 25 Oct 2012) in Iraq and Afghanistan.

[9] A debate, some have pointed to, that ignores the fact that women have in fact been found on the frontline for quite some time. A debate that is also likely to intensify in the UK after America's recent announcement that combat roles will now be opened to women.

[10] The British Army website proclaims that "[m]en and women have an equal part to play in society – and an equal part to play in the Army too" (MoD n.d.a).

[11] In 2011 there were an estimated 22,000 rapes and sexual assaults within the US military, the vast majority thought to occur to female recruits (McGreal 2012). In a 2006 survey into sexual harassment in the British forces it was reported that 99% of servicewomen had been subjected to some form of sexual remark or material by male colleagues, and that 15% have had a "particularly upsetting" experience, ranging from sexually explicit comments through to sexual assault (Maley 2006).

Abeer Qassim Hamza al-Janabi. In the military's frame of debate, the gender of these soldiers is invisible, neutral, insignificant.

However, if indeed the gender of these soldiers is insignificant and not worthy of discussion then this requires forgetting, or at best ignoring, just how much effort has been made to sustain masculinity's close association with soldiering. Whether done through formal, legal measures such as the female combat ban, or whether symbolically through the intimate tying of 'masculine' traits such as strength and aggression to idea(l)s of soldiers and soldiering. Enloe would claim that not paying attention to this, and instead relying on assumptions that soldiers have 'always' or 'traditionally' been male "saves mental energy" (2004: 1). The one thing however, that feminist curiosity requires is energy, because any power arrangement associated with 'tradition' or 'always' will be imbued "with legitimacy, with timelessness, with inevitability" and will be "pretty well fortified" (*ibid.*: 3). Having feminist curiosity about soldiers and the violences they enact and are subjected to means critically engaging with what has assumed to have been 'always' there. To pay attention to just how much work is involved in creating and sustaining an institution where masculine gender is rendered so ordinary, is such a 'given', that it can easily be overlooked. It means looking to the complex, contradictory and intersecting power relations at work that make it easier to blame individual pathology, mental illness, or the regrettable but inevitable effects of war. And it means taking notice of all those things others may disregard, all those everyday, banal, mundane things that can easily be ignored with "the sophisticated attire of reasonableness and intellectual efficiency: 'We can't be investigating everything!'" (*ibid.*: 3).

A combination then of my interest in militarised violences, the contradictions in the experiences of soldiering subjects and a feminist curiosity in the workings of masculinity within militaries, has brought me to the central research question of this project: In what ways do contemporary constructions of militarised masculinity help make possible specific acts of wartime violence? It is a research question that has been informed by and emerged out of a rich feminist literature on militarised masculinities[12], and the argument formed in answering this question is directed back at this feminist literature, as well as the wider feminist literature within International Relations. My aim is to contribute to this burgeoning field of research, to add both theoretical and methodological insights to a research topic that continues stimulate academic debate and interest. It is my methodological approach[13] that offers the most considerable contribution, providing a new approach to the topic and one that delivers a detailed reading of the militarised violences I unpack. While my primary

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[12] A feminist literature discussed in detail in my first chapter.
[13] A methodological approach unpacked in detail in Chapter Two.

audience is the feminist community within the discipline of International Relations, the close empirical work will also be of interest to those working more broadly in critical war studies and those with an interest in militarism. My research question is driven by a desire not just to unpack the relations of violence between a militarised masculine soldiering figure and the local populations they have been sent to protect, but also the violences enacted on the body of this soldiering figure itself. In answering this question I question the practices of the British military and militarism more generally, laying bare the discursive structures that both constitute a militarised masculine subjectivity and make specific militarised violences possible. I question the very possibility of being able to speak for a stable and coherent militarised masculine identity, arguing instead that it is in fact through its (im)possibility that such violences emerge. And I unpack the relation between understandings of subjectivities and how wartime violences are 'read' and understood. Before embarking on these questions of feminist curiosity however, I want to briefly explain my focus on the contemporary British military, explain the detail of the fieldwork I carried out, and provide a roadmap for the argument that follows.

Although not particularly patriotic, or at least not patriotic in the way the current Conservative-led British government would like me to be, I am British inasmuch as I was born here, hold a British passport and have lived virtually all my life in Britain. This 'Britishness' on my part was enough to make me specifically curious about the military that I'm told operates in 'my' name and for 'my' safety. This was combined with a seeming lack of specific and sustained feminist engagement with the British military and violences it is implicated in. Britain's decision to align itself so closely with American foreign policy in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, alongside a shared language and aspects of an 'Anglo-American' culture, have led, at times, for a conflation to be made between the two militaries. The specificities and distinctions between the two however, warrant attention; in particular, the perception that Britain is America's 'little brother' (not as big, not as bad), and Britain's history as a former imperial power. Firstly, while no other military may be able to match the size, scope and dominance of the US military, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan turned into insurgency-based conflict, a popular discourse emerged on both sides of the Atlantic that it was actually 'little brother' Britain who may be able to educate America in the ways of effective counterinsurgency. I remember one of the first (British) newspaper articles I read in the aftermath of the 2003 invasion into Iraq made much of the fact that while American soldiers wore reflective sunglasses, British soldiers did

not, thus allowing locals to look into their eyes. Secondly, and related, that it is Britain's history as a colonial power *par excellence* that has imbued the British military with this privileged knowledge about how to conduct counterinsurgency operations, how to engage with local populations (my third and fourth chapters deal explicitly with this particular rendering of the British military). In short, British military power appears as far less militaristic in relation to 'big brother' America. It may be however, that there is something potentially more dangerous in this less overt, less 'obvious' militarism. Is there greater opportunity to miss something when it is coming in the wake of something with bigger guns, more troops and not wearing sunglasses? It is then by taking notice of this more discreet military – one that claims to protect me – and by paying attention to the specificities in the masculinities that are produced through it that I answer the research question I pose.

In February 2011 I spent just under a week at Catterick Garrison in Yorkshire carrying out fieldwork with the British Army. Arranged through the Commanding Officer of the Scot's Guards, my days on the base were spent interviewing a range of serving soldiers, observing training practices such as a heavy weaponry class, and exploring – with a chaperone – the garrison. While the fieldwork had been organised with interviews in mind, and interviews did take place, it was the time away from the more formally organised fieldwork that I found most productive to my thinking about the military and to my research. Staying for a few days meant I slept on the base in a room by the officers' mess (a communal social area with sofas, a bar and open fire). I ate breakfast, lunch and dinner, and had drinks in the evening with the officers who also stayed on-site. In the daytime when I wasn't carrying out pre-arranged interviews I walked around the base with soldiers or sat and chatted with them in the mess. It tended to be the conversations I had during these times, rather than those when sitting across from a soldier with a Dictaphone between us, that proved most memorable and informed my argument and thesis the most.

First and foremost, and as indicated at the beginning of this introduction, this time and these conversations reminded me that soldiers were – and as Victoria Basham also states after her own fieldwork with the British military – *just people* (2013: 1, my emphasis). My fieldwork came at a time when I was beginning to research the obscene and violent actions of soldiers in the cases of Camp Breadbasket and murder of Baha Mousa, and in my own mind the soldiering figure was at risk of taking shape into an almost exclusively obscene and violent actor, beyond the realm of comprehension. With no members of my family in the armed forces, nor any friends, close or otherwise, who had chosen to join, soldiers really

were (and to a large extent, still are) 'over there' in terms of personal experience[14]. Spending even just a few days on a base surrounded exclusively by soldiers brought into sharp relief the multiple and contradicting parts of their subjectivities – 'soldier' after all was not their sole identity; they were shaped and moulded by multiple discourses that operated far beyond the realms of a military base. Secondly, these more informal conversations and the bits of day-to-day military life that went on around me alerted me to the 'everyday doings' that militarised masculine subjects engage in that both construct and render unstable their subjectivities. The photos on a recruit's wall, witnessing soldiers 'skiving' their daytime duties, and hearing an officer express his delight at chaperoning me as it meant he got out physical training that morning – all of these things got me thinking about how these innocuous, seemingly unworthy of mention, things connected to the extreme militarised violence that first caught my attention. And it is mapping this relationship, bridging the conceptual space between such seemingly unconnected activities, and helping to understand how such violences become possible, that this thesis is concerned with.

MAPPING THE TEXT

The thesis is loosely organised into two parts. Part one (Chapters 1 and 2) will concentrate on theoretical issues: about how militarised masculinity and its relation to violence has been theorised, the impossibility of a stable subjectivity, and how the thesis will conceptualise it. Part two (Chapters 3-5) consists of the 'empirical' chapters: detailing the specific discourses and myths at play in the construction of a contemporary militarised masculine subject and two specific sites of militarised violences, against the 'Other' and the 'Self'.

Chapter One begins by charting thinking about masculinity and violence from those who have rooted their relation in essentialist accounts and suggests a 'naturalness' or timelessness to certain gendered traits, to Judith Butler's theory of performativity that radically challenges the notion of a stable subject. Detailing the work of numerous scholars working within the field of militarised masculinities, the multiple, fragmented and disparate ways that militarised masculinities are produced and operate demonstrates the impossibility of fixing secure knowledge claims to who or what is 'militarised masculinity'. Despite however, the refutation of a fixed subject and the detail and nuance of this work, I argue, following Maria Stern and Marysia Zalewski (2009), that feminist theorising on militarised masculinity works to inadvertently rearticulate the borders of a subject, ontologically

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[14] However, and as addressed earlier, given that soldiers engage in acts of extreme violence in the name of the state and for 'my' protection, as a 'British citizen' I cannot *not* be connected to them.

'solidifying' militarised masculinity as 'known' and knowable. Finishing by returning to the impossibility of a stable and fixed militarised masculine subjectivity, the chapter ends by referring to the "(im)possible constitutive dynamic" (Pin-Fat and Stern 2005: 29) of militarised masculinity, pointing to the ways in which full representation will never be possible as that which is deemed 'outside' and 'Other' will always already be implicated in its constitution. I claim it is this (im)possibility that may help us understand how particular militarised violences are made possible.

Confronting the tension raised in my first chapter that despite its mythical status, militarised masculinity is being continually rearticulated and ontologically solidified in and through feminist theorising, my second chapter seeks to offer a potential epistemological and methodological intervention. It does so not by claiming it is possible to not remap, not re-mark, the borders marking a militarised masculine subject, but by drawing on the work of Avery Gordon (2008 [1997]) whose book, *Ghostly Matters*, encourages the reader to start paying attention to the ghosts and hauntings that trouble us at every turn, disrupting stories, identities and memories that may have once appeared stable and 'complete'. Appropriating Gordon's work, I understand hauntings as all that which has attempted to be kept 'outside' borders mapped around a militarised masculine subject but yet remains a "seething presence" (Gordon 2008: 8). I understand ghosts as that which gives notice to a haunting taking place – as a concrete materialisation of an aspect of a haunting. Becoming attuned to ghosts and hauntings will therefore reveal a militarised masculine subject's (im)possibility and the always already inclusion of that which it denies. I argue however, that the attention I pay to ghosts and hauntings does not only serve as a reminder of this (im)possibility. It is by paying attention to these ghostly matters that connections can be rendered visible between banal, 'everyday' soldiering practices and spectacular militarised violences. And it is to the constitution of this (im)possible militarised masculine subject, and the tracing of its ghosts and militarised violences that the rest of the thesis is concerned with.

Turning to the first of empirical chapters, my third chapter is concerned with the specific ways a contemporary British militarised masculine subject is constituted, and the discourses and myths integral to its production. The chapter begins by noting that in line with a number of other Western militaries, the British military has shifted from an institution almost exclusively concerned with war fighting, to one now intimately connected with nation building. Concomitant with this shift, a particular 'type' of soldiering figure is under production. Borrowing the term from Alison Howell (2011), I argue that the subjectivity under construction is a 'liberal warrior': a soldier both capable of deploying lethal force and

knowing when to hold it back. Paralleling with the Cartesian subject and its separation of mind from body, and rationality from irrationality, the chapter focuses on two specific 'myths' in operation during basic training that are central to a liberal warrior's production: the myth of asexuality and the myth of discipline. Through the myth of asexuality the haunting of bodily (homo)sexual potential is expelled despite the highly homosocial, and at times homoerotic and hypersexualised environment of basic training. The myth of discipline meanwhile ensures it is the hauntings of uncontrollability and messiness that are excluded, leaving in their place a perfectly controlled, perfectly rational soldiering figure. These myths however, are incomplete and the borders they mark between the myth and its disrupting hauntings are not hard and fixed, but soft and 'ghostly'. The chapter thus details some of the multiple ways a recruit's body resists, exceeds and falls short of limits set by the myths, and the appearances of ghosts that give notice to these hauntings. The chapter concludes that the materialisation of such ghosts point not only to the (im)possibility of the myths, but also to the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior itself.

Chapter Four deals with two specific appearances of ghosts in the form of violences perpetrated by British troops against the 'Other': firstly, the physical and sexual abuses at 'Camp Breadbasket', and secondly, the murder of Iraqi civilian Baha Mousa. Alongside numerous other documented accounts of abuse, these militarised violences appear to represent a rupture in the dominant renderings of a benevolent liberal warrior. I argue that these violences do not signify a departure from the subjectivity under construction in basic training, but a recontextulisation and recitation of its discourses and practices. As soldiering subjects move from their training centres in the UK to operational bases in Iraq and Afghanistan and are confronted with the ambiguity and confusion of war, cracks begin to appear in the already-fragile borders marking a liberal warrior. As militarised masculinity begins to unravel and undo, bodies marked as 'Other' along racial, cultural and religious lines become the site(s) of its obscene reiteration, and the violent appearance of (and embodiment of in the case of Mousa) a ghost. Expelled during basic training, the hauntings of (homo)sexuality and uncontrollability return and merge with haunting gendered, raced and sexualised spectres of Britain's colonial past to violently mark the bodies of Iraqi civilians. We are witness to the "unhappy echo" (Woodward and Winter 2007: 74) of asexual male group nakedness in the (homo)sexualised and enforced nakedness at Camp Breadbasket, and an 'excess' of legitimised and controlled violence in the murder of Mousa. Such violences are not a departure or aberrance of that which constitutes a liberal warrior, but a re-writing of the identity, a revelation of hauntings that were always already present, and located on a continuum with the supposedly asexual and disciplined practices of basic training.

My fifth chapter confronts that violence in war is not only directed towards the bodies of 'Others', but also plays out on the body of the Self: the liberal warrior subjectivity. The chapter pays specific attention to violences enacted by improvised explosive devices (IEDs), lain by the Taliban in Afghanistan. Beginning by claiming that while the brutality and bloodiness of war during the Gulf War was rendered *un*-visible through the fethishisation of military weaponry and technology, today such concealment has been achieved through the 'writing out' of barbarism from the figure of a liberal warrior. Complicity in, and the perpetration of, obscenity in war appears as 'outside' a liberal warrior. It is, in effect, what haunts. As has been shown however, hauntings cannot be 'fully' expelled; ghosts will materialise that give notice to what has attempted to be cast out. And it is in the aftermath of an IED explosion that a ghost emerges. In the torn flesh, mutilated bodies and chaos and confusion that follows the detonation of one of these devices, the visceral and violent 'reality' of war returns at full force and in full visibility. However, visibility of a ghost does not in itself reveal hauntings and I go on to argue that despite the spectacular and violent materialisation of the ghost, by 'reading' it in particular ways the haunting that it signifies remains concealed and papered over. The chapter ends by detailing the ways in which a ghost can be paid attention, and the haunting it gives notice to 'respected', that not only exposes the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior subjectivity and the violence integral to it, but also how its (re)production helps makes possible barbarism in war.

My conclusion returns to my research question, addressing it directly, and stating the contribution of this project. To pay attention to the masculinity constructed within national militaries and trace its connections to violence is not a 'new' research focus, and the contribution of this thesis therefore lies in its approach and it is this that the conclusion deals with. Revisiting Gordon's work on ghosts and hauntings and my specific appropriation of it, two methodological contributions are identified. Firstly, that by paying attention to ghosts and hauntings both the specificities of the soldiering subject under construction can be revealed and its ultimate (im)possibility. While the myth of asexuality and myth of discipline may not be 'new' to the production of a militarised masculine subjectivity, the specific hauntings they seek to expel are distinct to the contemporary context. It is however, in the very practices and 'doings' that attempt to enact this expulsion that a liberal warrior is simultaneously undone – herein lies the (im)possibility. Secondly, my methodology allows the conceptual space between the banal and the obscene, the everyday and the spectacularly violent, to be bridged. Revealing that both emerge from the attempted exorcism of hauntings, my methodology renders visible the ways two seemingly disparate moments are

in fact intimately connected to one another. The thesis ends by reflecting on two broader implications for the theoretical and methodological work that has been done: it warns against being seduced by the idea of re-scripted and 'improved' militarised masculine identity and its depoliticising potential. It also points to the ways that this methodology has broader implications for feminist IR in the ways it is particularly suited to questions of feminist curiosity.

CHAPTER ONE

MILITARISED MASCULINITIES AND VIOLENCE:

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

It is not difficult to associate masculinity both physically (in its primary signifier, the bio-male body) and conceptually (as strength, valour, aggression) as connected with warfare, and by extension, the violences of war. Throughout history and in today's popular culture, the dominant stories of war we tell tend to be largely populated by male-identified bodies, marked by the 'masculine' virtues of heroism, violence, aggression and strength. In the contemporary context, alongside this are news reports, crowded with reports of 'our' soldiers or others' soldiers enacting violence in war (whether 'legitimately' or 'illegitimately') or being viscerally marked by violence themselves (the highly visible repatriation of dead soldiers; disfigured and disabled war veterans). Violence, whether as perpetrator or victim, seems inextricably tied to the figure of a masculine soldier.

Femininity – again both physically and conceptually – does appear, as it always has. It appears, for example, in the body of Sarah Bryant, the first British female soldier to be killed in Afghanistan, and in the 'feminised' language of 'partnership' and 'hearts and minds' in counterinsurgency doctrine. However, such appearances do little to significantly disrupt or trouble the dominant stories of war, masculinity and violence that are told. It is the power and endurance of these representations that have prompted feminists and others interested in gender relations to set about explaining and unpacking this entanglement of man/masculinity/war/violence. And it is the attempt of this starting chapter to set about charting their understandings, and the different ways we might begin to understand militarised masculinity and its relation to violence. While some works explicitly unpack the subjectivity 'militarised masculinity' in relation to specific acts or moments of violence, others make more general connections between the types of masculinity produced within militaries and the simultaneous valorisation of violence within the institution.

I start with a brief discussion of essentialist accounts of men and masculinity, and women and femininity, and their assumed connections with war and peace respectively. Such accounts assume some kind of 'essence' of masculinity and femininity is present beneath the surface of gender identities, an essence often associated with men's presumed

evolutionary hunting and killing instincts, and (most) women's ability to bear children. By eliding gender and sex in this way, gendered identities become fixed and reified, and are deployed as objects or variables in research. Feminists however, have long recognised that understanding gender as fixed or as an object ignores the multiple masculinities and femininities in circulation within social worlds, as well as the contradictions and paradoxes inherent in any gendered identity. There has then been something of a shift within gender studies from understanding gender as an object, to understanding it as relational, which, in turn, has broken down simplistic dichotomous thinking of masculine-versus-feminine, men-versus-women. R. W. Connell's theorising of multiple masculinities has been seminal here and given those interested in studying masculinities a language that has moved the study from one of masculinity (singular), to one of masculinities (plural).

The chapter then turns to the ways in which authors writing on militarised masculinities have deployed this understanding of masculinities as relational both to femininities and subordinate or hegemonic masculinities. In this literature, militarised masculinities are not understood as clustering round a monolithic and caricatured soldier-identity. Rather, they embody roles as diverse as an aviator pilot, Royal Air Force (RAF) clerk, militarised nuclear scientist and cyborg soldier. A stable, fixed and 'knowable' militarised masculinity is not present here. Such authors have frequently pointed to the importance of hierarchical binary pairings – masculine/feminine; strong/weak; heterosexual/homosexual; mind/body – in the construction of a soldier, with a militarised masculine subjectivity aligned with the former, privileged term, often explicitly or implicitly associated with masculinity. However, these authors also point to the complex and contradictory relations militarised masculinities have with the latter excluded or denigrated terms, with differing contexts and power relations providing opportunities for those marked as militarised and masculine to take on and display such 'feminised' markers. With militarised masculinity thus appearing as an empty signifier, capable of being filled any number of times by any number of traits, Judith Butler's theory of performativity is presented as providing a more productive way of understanding the contradictions and paradoxes inherent in a militarised masculine subject. While militarised masculinity is shown to come into 'being' through the performative enactments said to be its effects, this chapter will also implicate feminist scholarship in the ontological solidification and (re)production of the very militarised masculine subject such scholarship seeks to deconstruct. The chapter ends by revisiting the performative and (im)possible militarised masculine subjectivity, and what implications this 'unknowability' has for connections between 'it' and on-going militarised violences.

VIOLENT MAN, PEACEFUL WOMAN

Man's connection to warfare and woman's to peace, have been in existence in Western public imagination since at least *Lysistrata* was first shown in Athens in the fifth century BC. This Greek comedy describes the coming together of Athenian, Corinthian and Spartan women to declare a sex strike against their husbands until they stop fighting one another (Yuval Davis 1997: 94)[15]. The extent to which women and femininity should be associated with peace – and thus men and masculinity with war – remains an on-going debate in feminist literature. Despite a number of scholars in gender studies, International Relations and the social sciences more generally, recognising the problematic nature of essentialist accounts of men and women, for many masculinity and femininity as concepts hold a certain 'essence' below the surface. An 'essence' that explains men's proclivity towards violence and women's towards passivity[16].

Some essentialist accounts connect masculinity and femininity with biological sex and draw on sociobiology[17] to help explain the distinct ways they understand men and women to act. The human male is assumed to have evolved with, and because of, genetically programmed hunting and killing instincts (Segal 1987: 179). Anthropomorphism – the "projection of characteristics of particular values and significance to humans back on to animals, where they can be 'discovered' and used to explain human society" (*ibid.*: 183) – is used by sociobiologists looking for 'proof' of women's peaceful nature and men's violent tendencies as biological 'givens'. Such anthropomorphism is compounded outside the academy with frequent newspaper articles on popular science and nature programmes obsessed with revealing a natural world of male dominance and the inevitability of sexual difference (*ibid.*: 183-4). According to these essentialist stories, men's 'natural' aggression together with their apparent physical advantages of strength and speed make them suited for military life with its violent practices and intense and physically demanding training drills.

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[15] Sex strikes, largely initiated by women, continue to take place today in attempts to stop numerous violences including civil wars (Liberia), drug cartels (Columbia) and gang violence (also Colombia). Leymah Gbowee, a young Liberian mother, initiated one such sex strike in 2003 to end the country's brutal civil war. In 2011 Gbowee won the Nobel Peace Prize alongside two other women – Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Tawakkul Karman – for her campaign, as well continued efforts in non-violent action in support of women's rights and peacebuilding work (Braw 2012).

[16] Feminists who allude to women's innate peaceful nature include B. Brock-Utne (1985); Jean Bethke Elshtain (1982 and 1995 [1987]); N. Hartstock (1989); Pam McAllister (1982); Betty A. Reardon (1985); and Sara Ruddick (1983a and 1983b).

[17] The sociobiology literature includes Robert Ardey (1977); Lionel Tiger and Robin Fox (1971); and Lionel Tiger (1984).

Radical feminists are most commonly identified as those who outline women's different attitudes towards war and peace than men. Broadly, these writers suggest women are more peace-loving, more nurturing and more connected with life than their male counterparts. Some radical feminists converge with the sociobiologists, stating it is a biological inevitability that men are more aggressive, hierarchical and territorial than women, while women's reproductive responsibility as child-bearer and emblematic position as 'mother' is evidence of their innate ability to care and nurture. Others however, deny biological determinism, suggesting instead that it is the rejection of the 'feminine' values of nurturing and care-giving that leads to increased male aggression and violence[18] (Whitworth 1997: 17-8). However, whether determined by nature or socialisation, these feminists purport women have an innate connection to peace. Implicit in much of this scholarship is an allusion to women's reproductive role and their 'maternal instinct'. Sara Ruddick, a key feminist thinker in the practices of thinking associated with mothering, argues there is a real basis for the association of women with peace. For Ruddick, "[w]omen are daughters who learn from their mothers the activity of preservative love and the maternal thinking that arises from it" (1983a: 479). These values of 'preservative love' are fundamentally opposed to military strategy leading Ruddick to claim that a "daughter, one might say, has been trained to be unsoldierly" (*ibid*.: 479). Although Ruddick states that preservative love and maternal thinking are taught, and "the peacefulness of women cannot be answered by claims about the essential nature of all women" (*ibid*.: 485), Ruddick, and feminists like her, make a clear demarcation between masculine values that create violence and warfare, and feminine values that are inherently pacifist.

Those authors who attempt to separate biological sex from socially or culturally constructed gendered identities fail to successfully make the distinction. Motherhood is posited as a transnational and ahistorical identity that all women share to some extent, whether through the act of mothering themselves or being mothered[19]. Similarly, experiences of "the sacrificial soldier and the professional *brother*hood" are described as "the clearest and most consistent expression of human companionship" (Elshtain 1995 [1987]: 210, my emphasis). By connecting (as Ruddick's 'maternal thinking' and 'preservative love' does) nurturing and care-giving tendencies with motherhood, and practices of warfare and violence with a warrior brotherhood, gendered identities become tied to sexed bodies. Thus,

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[18] Some of the authors mentioned in footnote 16 will offer examples of such scholarship.
[19] Jean Bethke Elshtain (1982) in particular makes this point. She does concede however, that men, having been mothered themselves, can experience Ruddick's 'maternal thinking', albeit with greater difficulty. Ruddick too understands mothering as *practice*, and one that both men and women can engage in (Ruddick 1983a).

the 'masculine' (and those also most commonly associated with war and the military) traits of violence, aggression and dominance are attributed to male-identified bodies, while the 'feminine' traits of passivity, care-giving and nurture are associated with female-identified bodies. Biological or cultural, these authors proceed from the standpoint that certain gendered characteristics and traits are 'givens'.

GENDER AS OBJECT

By eliding gender and sex (sex is always already gendered, and gender always already sexed)[20], gendered identities become fixed and reified, meaning gender is essentially treated as an object or variable by scholars who choose to employ it in this way. Joshua Goldstein for example makes the claim that when constructing soldiers, cultures work with a "set of biological and psychological elements – building materials so to speak – that exist across all human cultures" (2001: 251). These 'building materials' are then exposed to a number of practices in order to effectively produce the warrior soldiers required; practices such as training regimes, prestige and honour, shame. While Goldstein concedes that some of these practices are gendered (for example, cultural responses to combat trauma; the attributing of warrior qualities to manhood), he also claims that a number are genderless. Both alcohol and religion are given as examples of non-gendered means of producing soldiers. Goldstein attributes alcohol as a partial solution to the "fear problem" (*ibid.*: 257) soldiers experience during battle and states religion "is not inherently gendered" (*ibid.*: 258), giving a number of historical examples of religion being an important force in getting young men to fight and keeping them in battle.

To claim however, that the use of alcohol and religion is non-gendered when constructing militarised masculine identities ignores the highly gendered discursive structures surrounding them. For example, drinking large quantities of alcohol has not only been used in providing nervous soldiers with courage in combat; a general culture of drinking permeates the military. John Hockey, writing about the drinking culture within the British infantry and the particular form of masculinity underpinning it, notes the belief amongst soldiers that "'[r]eal men' drink, and they drink hard…because this is what 'real men' *naturally* do" (2003: 22, emphasis in original). Likewise, while Goldstein states that religion

[20] Judith Butler, who will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter, rejects the distinction between sex and gender but does so differently through her understanding of both sex and gender as performatively constituted. Butler makes the claim that as the body (sex) cannot exist outside gendered discourse, then there is no body that is not always already gendered (Salih 2002: 74). (See Judith Butler 1993, 1999 [1990], 2004 for a more thorough discussion on performativity and its effects.)

would not preclude women from serving as soldiers, religion has formed a fundamental part of cultural belief systems and conservative forces that "shape gender stereotypes and determine 'appropriate' gender activities" (Peterson and Runyan 1999: 102). Through religion women have been defined primarily as wives and mothers ('Madonnas') and confined to the private sphere, while men are free to operate in the public sphere and expected to take on the role of (militarised) protector/defender.

In the same way Goldstein employs alcohol and religion as objects that exist outside gendered discourses, he also employs gender itself as an object that can be added to particular situations or have other objects added to it[21] (for example, alcohol and religion). While Goldstein does not use fixed understandings of masculinity and femininity and recognises the ways in which gendered identities can change across different cultures and historical periods, his frequent use of information and statistics divided along sexed lines and then unproblematically applied to gendered identities, means that, in practice, gender is treated and deployed as an object. Masculinity and femininity are not however, static and immovable variables that can be deployed objectively, or added to, and subtracted from, various social and cultural contexts. To treat gender in this way is to ignore that gender is always relational and that gendered identities come into being through their performances and interactions with others. Treating gender as an object assumes that, to a greater or lesser degree, masculinity and femininity have fixed boundaries (even if they remain fixed only for a short amount of time) that allows them to be applied collectively to the study of international politics, or any other discipline. To fix boundaries in this way, to map and 'solidify' the borders of a subject is to assume it is knowable and stable, and to disregard the paradoxes inherent in any gendered identity. Such an understanding would therefore fail to account for those soldiers who fall 'outside' dominant representations of what it is to 'be' militarised and masculine (for example, the female soldier, the homosexual soldier, the scared soldier), as well as failing to account for the changing norms and characteristics associated with soldiering and warfare more generally (examples of which will be unpacked below).

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[21] Authors and policy recommendations that purport simply by increasing the numbers of women in power/the military will ensure increased peace also deploy gender as an object. While Ruddick (1983a) suggests this as a way to 'pacify' military forces and does so optimistically, the military historian Martin van Creveld argues the inclusion of women into the "advanced" (2000: 429) militaries of the world have led to them being no longer as capable of fighting wars.

GENDER AS RELATIONAL

There is then a need to move away from those analyses that treat gender as an object or variable and towards those that view it as a relation instead[22]. To do so is to make visible the "multiple and multidimensional processes" (Hooper 2001: 39) gender identities are constructed through, and transcend the simple dichotomous thinking of male/female, masculine/feminine, violent/peaceful[23]. R. W. Connell's account of gender identities[24], and masculinities in particular, as relational concepts has been seminal in providing gender theorists and feminists with the language and theoretical 'tools' to move away from an analysis of *masculinity* (singular), toward an analysis of *masculinities* (plural) (*ibid*.: 53)[25]. For Connell, masculinity and femininity are inherently relational concepts, with knowledge of masculinity arising from within the project of knowing gender relations – masculinity is always "masculinity-in-relation" (Connell 2005 [1995]: 43-4). Gender identities are "configurations of gender practice" (*ibid*.: 72)[26] produced through social structures, including, power relations[27], production relations and cathexis (the sociopsychological structuring of sexual desire and emotional attachments) (*ibid*.: 74-5), "that are themselves constituted by repeated practices, including discursive practices" (Hooper 2001: 54). That there can be some kind of "fixed, true masculinity beneath the ebb and flow of daily life" (Connell 2005: 45), a timeless masculinity 'naturally' associated with aggression and warfare

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[22] For examples of authors who view gender as a relation (albeit in differing ways) as opposed to an object please see: R.W. Connell (1985, 1987, 2000, 2002 [1995]); Cynthia Enloe (1988 [1983], 1993, 2000a [1989], 2000b); Charlotte Hooper (2001); V. Spike Peterson (1992); Jill Steans (2006); Christine Sylvester (1994 and 2002); Ann Tickner (1992); Sandra Whitworth (1997); and Marysia Zalewski and Jane Parpart (1998 and 2008).

[23] It should be noted that despite the literature that follows having an explicit feminist or gender focus, it has not solely been gender theorists who have disrupted assumptions between assumed connections between masculinity and violence and war. For example, Joanna Bourke traces the complex ways in which "[i]ntimate acts of killing in war are committed by historical subjects imbued with language, emotion, and desire" (1999: xxiii). Bourke's study explores how 'normal' men and women become capable of extreme acts of violence. Dave Grossman also rejects claims that man is a killer by nature, arguing instead that there is an "existence of a powerful, innate human resistance toward killing one's own species". Modern militaries, Grossman goes on to claim, have developed sophisticated psychological mechanisms "to overcome that resistance" (1995: xxix). (Grossman's thesis goes even further suggesting that "violence-enabling in the electronic media" [*ibid*.: xxii] – computer games, violent films and television programmes – is "indiscriminately condition[ing] our nation's children to kill. In a fashion very similar to the way the army conditions soldiers to kill" [*ibid*.: xxx].)

[24] The development of Connell's analysis can be traced in his following works:1985, 1987, 2000, 2002 (1995).

[25] While feminists for a long time have been aware of the epistemological challenges of speaking from the subject position 'woman' given differences in identity markers such as race, class and sexuality, concepts of men and masculinity have often been inadvertently treated as unproblematic, undifferentiated wholes (Hooper 2001: 42).

[26] Connell makes it clear that the term 'configuration' is not meant as a static term. Masculinity and femininity are understood as dynamic "*gender projects*": processes of configuring practice through time (Connell 2002: 72, emphasis in original).

[27] Connell sites the main axis of power in the contemporary European/American gender order as the subordination of women and domination of men.

and thus intimately linked to soldiering, is rejected by those theorists who understand gender identities to be relational concepts.

Connell argues that there are multiple masculinities (and femininities) in existence. Recognising however, that this is only the first step, Connell argues that we also have to examine the relations between them, "relations of alliance, dominance and subordination…constructed through practices that exclude and include, that intimidate, [and] exploit". Connell demonstrates that there is in fact a "gender politics within masculinity (*ibid*.: 37). Using the term 'hegemonic masculinity'[28] to denote the "one form of masculinity rather than others that is culturally exalted" (*ibid*.: 77), Connell unpacks the ways in which masculine gender intersects with other factors such as class, race and sexuality. Connell states, "hegemony is likely to be established only if there is some correspondence between cultural ideal and institutional power, collective if not individual", and points to the top levels of government, military and business to illustrate this. Such cultures and institutions have remained relatively unshaken by feminist women or dissenting men (*ibid*.: 77). While hegemonic masculinity works to reinforce male power and advantage, it simultaneously subordinates, and even culturally stigmatises, those masculinities that fall outside its culturally prescribed boundaries (Connell makes this point explicit with regard to homosexuality). Contemporary Western constructions of hegemonic masculinity can tend to be identified as white, heterosexual, middle-class and educated, as predominantly seen at the top levels of the culturally significant institutions Connell points to.

Charlotte Hooper (2001) critiques Connell's approach for failing to completely move beyond structuralism in her theory of gender construction. Hooper demonstrates that while Connell focuses on the "practice, dynamic relations, fluidity, and change in the construction of gender identities", a "residual structuralism" remains in her discussion of the gender order (Hooper 2001: 56-7). By separating the gender order into structural categories (power, production and cathexis), a static logic is imposed, contradicting Connell's earlier claims that there can be no gendered 'entity'. However, despite these criticisms Hooper recognises the usefulness of Connell's language of plural masculinities in undermining the simplistic

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[28] The concept of 'hegemony' is derived from Antonio Gramsci's analysis of class relations and "refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life" (Connell 2005: 77). Connell makes it clear that hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed character type, nor the most 'common' masculinity. What constitutes hegemonic masculinity is always changing, and differs across time and place. Hegemonic masculinity is never automatic and is subject to disruption from forces external to it and from within. While very few men rigorously practice hegemonic patterns of masculinity in their entirety (I, in fact, would go further and claim it is impossible to ever 'fully' know what hegemonic masculinity is, let alone practice it), the majority of men benefit from its hegemony (Connell 2005: 79).

masculine/feminine binary that has pervaded much of the previous literature on gender construction (*ibid.*: 58).

Hooper argues that there is a need to explore the role of the feminist concept of masculinism (the exclusion and devaluation of women and femininity) in relationships between different masculinities (*ibid*: 59). Following Connell's argument, Hooper claims that positively valued traits and qualities are not solely identified with masculinity in general (at the expense of femininity), but are more closely representative of hegemonic masculinity in particular. Certain masculinities can therefore become 'feminised' through masculinist practices. Like Connell (but without her problematic structuralism), Hooper views masculinity as having no fixed attributes, and the qualities, practices and peoples that get to be associated with masculinity is the subject of a series of heterogeneous power struggles (*ibid.*: 75). However, Hooper simultaneously wants to avoid treating masculinity as a completely empty referent, with "no stable content at all beyond its association with power", for fear of dissolving all meaning of masculinity altogether (*ibid.*: 61). For Hooper, even as masculinity is subjected to endless revision and reinterpretation, it must still "be recognizable as masculinity, otherwise, the gendered divisions its construction supports are erased" (*ibid.*: 61). In particular, hegemonic masculinity must be recognisable as "real" masculinity in order to maintain its powerful position in the gender order (*ibid.*: 61).

Hooper views masculinity as both a generic term while also recognising the existence of plural masculinities: "As long as there are enough common characteristics with some other masculinities, to make each variety recognizable as such…new elements can be introduced to accommodate change" (*ibid.*: 62). Hegemonic masculinity is then not a fixed set of dominant traits, but a constantly negotiated construct that draws on a pool of available characteristics, which although may be mutually contradictory, "can be put together in different combinations depending on circumstances". Thus, in different times and in different cultures, different pools of characteristics become available (*ibid.*: 62). This understanding of the construction of masculinity means that,

> No two images or manifestations of masculinity need be exactly alike. Thus, the mix-and-match nature of hegemonic masculinity accounts for its many contradictions, while the overlap in constructions and the incorporation of individual characteristics into gendered dichotomies provide continuity and naturalize 'masculinity' as a powerful, timeless, and stable phenomenon (*ibid.*: 62).

Connell and Hooper have set the theoretical ground to enable us to move beyond the simplistic masculine/feminine essentialist debate. Recognising that 'masculinity' is not

tied to the biologically sexed body 'man' but is in fact a historical project and can conceptually be filled any number of ways and through any number of means. Gender identities are no longer understood as objects or variables, but as on-going processes and inherently relational. Focusing not just on the existence of multiple masculinities, but also the relations between masculinities, masculinist strategies separate the concept of masculinity from its association with male sex by denying that some men are indeed masculine (*ibid.*: 71).

MULTIPLE MILITARISED MASCULINITIES

Scholars writing on militarised masculinity have adopted this understanding of gendered identities as relational and the language of 'multiple masculinities' and 'hegemonic masculinity'. The literature does not cluster round a caricatured and monolithic understanding of a soldier as aggressive, violent and sexist. Rather, a range of gendered militarised behaviours is explored, as well as a range of militarised identities under construction[29]. Frank Barrett, for example, examines the construction of hegemonic masculinity within the US Navy. Seeking to "deconstruct the notion of monolithic masculinity associated with the military" (1996: 129), Barrett pays attention to three different communities within the Navy – aviation, surface warfare and the supply corps – exploring the range of "masculine discourses and identities" (*ibid.*: 129) at work. While naval aviators "come closest to embodying the ideal of hegemonic masculinity" demonstrating "aggressiveness, technical mastery of complex machinery, courage, and autonomy" (*ibid.*: 134), service personnel in surface warfare and the supply corps are also capable of drawing on a number of different strands of hegemonic masculinity to secure their own masculine identities. Surface warfare officers emphasise the physical hardships they are expected to endure as well as "calmly demonstrating competence in the face of pressure" (*ibid.*: 136), while the supply corps understand their masculinity through their technical rationality and disembodied reason (*ibid.*: 138). None of these militarised masculine identities however, are secure. Barrett argues that attempts to achieve a secure masculine identity create the very conditions that ultimately undermine the possibility of such an achievement (*ibid.*: 141). "[M]ilitary life is very demanding. Every officer, at some point(s) in his career, is likely to experience degradation, and humiliation that often accompany continual surveillance, testing, ranking, gruelling life conditions, and the constant possibility of failure" (*ibid.*: 141).

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[29] See (among others): Frank Barrett (1996); Victoria Basham (2013); Belkin (2012); Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Hubic (2002); Claire Duncanson (2009 and 2013); Cynthia Enloe (1993) (chapter 3 in particular); Paul Higate (2003); David Morgan (1994); Cristina Masters (2005; 2008); Steve Niva (1998); and Sandra Whitworth (2004). (A selection of these authors will be discussed in-text.)

Attempts at affirming and re-affirming their masculine identities to themselves and others are therefore marked by a "persistent sense of fragility and precariousness" and is "unlikely to lead to the achievement of a secure identity" (*ibid*.: 141). In the British context Paul Higate similarly pluralises understandings of militarised masculinities, seeking to go beyond the stereotypical associations of "violence, misogyny and heterosexuality" (2003a: 27) of the identity. While Higate, like Barrett, identifies hegemonic masculinity as standing for an "idealized warrior ethic" (*ibid*.: 30) clustered around traits such as "violence, aggression, rationality, and a sense of invulnerability" (*ibid*.: 29), he also points to the number of "second best" militarised masculinities that are grouped around it. Higate uses a "continuum marked by highly skilled SAS troops at one extreme through RAF stewards at the other" (*ibid*.: 30) to illustrate his point.

Cynthia Enloe (1993) unhinges militarised masculine identities from direct attachment to the military institution, tracing the ways in which a number of civilian subcultures of the military produce militarised and masculinised identities, as opposed to those embedded in the 'total institution'[30] of the military. Through her analysis Enloe demonstrates that connections between men, masculinity and the military are various and plural. Drawing on the work of Carol Cohn (1990), William Broad (1987) and Richard Rhodes (1986) respectively, Enloe explores the ways defence intellectuals, 'Star Wars' research scientists and scientists working on the 'Manhattan Project', all constructed very specific, and very different, militarised masculine identities. In these sites militarised masculine identities are not constituted through excessive violence, the wearing of army fatigues, or carrying a rifle. Instead, nuclear missiles are "patted", removing their lethal purpose; competition and rivalry are the norm; and, militarised scientists in the New Mexican desert make regular visits to the single women's barracks (Enloe 1993: 95-8).

Alongside this scholarship that explores relations between different 'types' of militarised masculinities, there is also that which explores the ways in which militarised masculine identities shift and change in line with the specific context of war that emerge within. In this way we can begin to see something of a co-constitutive relation between warfare and militarised masculinities. For example, in line with the "new paradigm of masculinity" (Niva 1998: 111) that was thought to have emerged during the Gulf War in 1991, Steve Niva traces the ways in which the political, social and cultural context shaped a

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[30] The concept of a 'total institution' is taken from Erving Goffman (1961), who used this term to embrace institutions that shared in common a lack of any 'offstage' area to which an individual (in this case a military recruit) can withdraw to for privacy and a tendency to diminish recruits' sense of individuality (Hockey 1986: 23).

'new' form of militarised masculinity. A militarised masculinity that was viewed as slightly feminised though its construction as "tough and aggressive, yet tenderhearted". The American General Colin Powell openly wept at his Harlem high school reunion, while General Norman Schwarzkopf, spoke of his love for opera and his family (*ibid.*: 118). This softer, gentler militarised man signalled a distinct break with the previous militarised masculine construction of the "megamasculine" Rambo (*ibid.*: 119), especially popular in the years following America's 'humiliation' in Vietnam[31]. It also reflected the trend in civilian society to talk of the so-called "New Man, identifiable through his ability to empathize with others and perform gender in a more feminized way" (Higate 2003b: 204). As war fighting tactics shifted and 'technowar'[32] emerged, militarised masculinity became capable of occupying spaces previously deemed as 'feminine' or 'unmanly'. With Rambo-like constructions of militarised masculinity taking a backseat, "technologically sophisticated heroes of Tom Clancy's 'technothriller' novels" emerged to replace him (Niva 1998: 119).

Through a performative[33] understanding of America's idealised militarised masculine subjectivity, Cristina Masters (2005; 2008) explores the ways that military techno-scientific discourses have (re)constituted and (re)produced American soldiers to "fit into, operate and function in this ostensibly new information age" by constructing a "cyborg soldier" (2005: 113). Masters claims that hierarchical dualisms that traditionally distinguished between masculinity and femininity have now been displaced by distinctions between technologized cyborgs and humanoids (Masters 2008: 95). As distinctions between a cyborg soldier and the traditional, imperfect (male) soldier have become discursively formalised along the lines of masculinity and femininity, characteristics conventionally inscribed on male bodies "have been rearticulated…and remapped on to military technologies" (*ibid.*: 95). Thus, while culture, mind, superior, objectivity, disembodied, strength, active, rational are inscribed upon the technologized and cyborg bodies that populate the US military, nature, body, inferior, subjectivity, embodied, weakness, passive and irrational now mark the humanoid bodies of soldiers (*ibid.*: 95). This formation of a cyborg soldier reveals gender representations as "contingent, historically grounded, social constructs" (Masters 2005: 116). Neither the bio-male body nor military technologies are prediscursively 'masculine'; rather, constructions of a cyborg soldier – or any militarised masculine embodiment – must "be understood as performative and in continual (re)production" (*ibid.*: 116).

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[31] Susan Jeffords (1989) demonstrates the ways in which American response to Vietnam and its representations in film, oral history, novels and short stories served to 'remasculinise' Vietnam veterans, social relations, and the US as a whole.

[32] The 1991-2 Gulf War is generally considered as the first 'technowar'. A war in which capital-intensive, high-technology weaponries took centre stage as opposed to the masculine and human bodies of soldiers.

[33] Judith Butler's theory of performativity will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

Building on the work of the feminists above, this research project will focus its attention on a specific 'type' or conceptualisation of militarised masculinity, and one that has emerged in and through the contemporary context of war and military intervention the British military is currently involved in. Borrowing the term from Alison Howell (2011), I will call this particular militarised masculine subjectivity a 'liberal warrior' and it will be its construction through particular discourses and everyday practices, and its relation to specific acts of violence in war – both those perpetrated by liberal warriors and those they are subjected to – that I will unpack. Specifically, I want to explore the ways in which the shift from 'all out' war to counterinsurgency operations has affected perceptions of what a discursively idealised soldiering subject looks like and what characteristics and traits such a subject will embody. As day-to-day practices of warfare have begun to include the more 'feminised' practices of empathy, negotiation and 'hearts and minds', an 'ideal-type' soldier has been 'softened' while still maintaining its ultimately masculine framing. Central to these masculine identifications of a liberal warrior are understandings tied to the sovereign, autonomous and reasoning Cartesian subject, and its relation to the colonial and 'Othered' populations such a subject will encounter during their tours of duty.

Hierarchical binary pairings such as those discussed by Masters above are understood by the majority of authors as prisms through which militarised masculinities are constructed, with the subjectivity aligning itself with the former, and privileged, term in the partnership. The latter terms are excluded from dominant, or hegemonic, understandings of what is to 'be' militarised and masculine, instead coming to represent what militarised masculinities are *not*. In the production of militarised masculinities (perhaps most overtly during basic training[34]) ideals of masculinity reflected in these binaries are nurtured and exaggerated. Sandra Whitworth writes about the importance of "the denigration of everything marked by difference, whether that be women, people of color, or homosexuality" (2004: 161) in the constitution of a soldier. It is however, the denigration of women and femininity in particular that much of the focus of the literature rests[35]. As Whitworth states, soldiers must "deny all that is deemed to be feminine" (*ibid*.: 161-2). For

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[34] My third chapter will deal explicitly with the ways in which particular gendered discourses operate during basic training in order to produce a militarised masculine subjectivity.

[35] While this denigration of the feminine is in some respects reflected in the policy banning women in frontline combat roles which is in place in a number of Western – including the British – militaries, it may also deflect attention away from other discourses of difference that produce a soldier (for example, discourses of race, sexuality, class). This is not to say that such discourses are completely ignored by those writing on militarised masculinities (see for example, Cohn 1998; Razack 2004; and Richter-Montpetit 2007), rather, that gender – and masculinity in particular – becomes the dominant discourse through which it is understood.

example, in Barrett's analysis of the US Navy and the multiple masculinities that emerge within it he states, "[a]ll of the masculinities achieve meaning in contrast to definitions of femininity"; specifically, definitions that depict women "as emotionally unstable, less able to endure physical challenges, and unable to tolerate the harsh conditions of ship life" (Barrett 1996: 140). Likewise, Marcia Kovitz argues that "fault lines along which military masculinity fractures internally" (2003: 9) – the ranking system in place within militaries that demarcate more and less powerful men, hegemonic and subordinate masculinities – is camouflaged through an emphasis on male-female difference. Reinforcing opposition to femininity (either by framing weakness and failure as distinctly 'feminine' traits or resisting attempts at opening up the military to female recruits) allows for differences amongst militarised masculinities to be masked and the appearance of uniform masculinity and unity.

Authors writing on militarised masculinities have however also complicated this expulsion of women and all things marked by the denigrated femininity, pointing to the ways in which those who embody militarised masculinities have had "to enter into intimate relationships with femininity, queerness and other unmasculine foils, not just to disavow them" (Belkin 2012: 4). Cynthia Enloe (1988 [1983]; 1993; 2000a [1989]; 2000b) in her detailed and wide-ranging research has traced the ways in which women and femininity have indeed been crucial to both the running of a large and complex organisation and as visible markers of difference for militarised men to be constructed in opposition to. David Morgan points to the ways in which war – in many ways understood as the ultimately masculine practice – actually provides the opportunity for the display of "characteristics more conventionally associated with the feminine than with the masculine. These include open and physical displays of mutual concern and care, [and] a willingness to show fear and pain" (1994: 177). And John Hockey draws attention to the disjuncture between the military's "near-pathological concern for cleanliness, neatness and uniformity" and the promise of an "action packed, adventurous life, filled with masculine challenge" (1986: 50-1). In all these readings of militarised masculinities, femininities are not easily discarded or ignored in our understandings of the subjectivities being produced, nor can a simple relation be assumed between masculinity, the military, and war/violence. Rather, different contexts, power relations and appropriations of hierarchical binary pairings, operate to constitute a militarised masculine subject that has no stable foundations, no 'essence'. Masculinity is an 'empty signifier' capable of being filled and emptied and (re)filled multiple, infinite times. 'Militarised masculinity' is the Special Forces soldier, the RAF clerk, the gentle peacekeeper and the high-technology weapon. 'It' is aggression, violence and a lack of squeamishness, but is also capable of including and co-opting homosocial love, care-giving and tears on the

battlefield. In short, militarised masculinity reveals itself to be an identity that "has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality" (Butler 1999 [1990]: 185).

GENDER AS PERFORMATIVE

Judith Butler's (1993; 1999; 2004) theory of performativity argues that as ontological locales the "real" or the "natural" are fundamentally uninhabitable (1999: 200). Instead, thinking performatively about militarised masculinities and gendered identities more generally, radically unsettles the possibility of a stable or coherent personhood. Denying that gendered or sexed identities[36] are fixed or natural, Butler argues that such identities are performatively enacted through the words, acts and gestures that are said to be the effects of an ontologically solidified gendered identity. Thinking performatively about gendered identities is to understand them as coming into being only through the 'doing' of gender. It is not then that aggression, strength and risk-taking behaviour are the acts or behaviours of a militarised masculine subject, but that it is in fact the doing of these things that work to (re)produce the subject in the first place. This is not however, to suggest there is a "doer behind the deed" (*ibid*.: 195), or that gender 'choices' can be made freely (for example, that an agential subject can freely choose which gendered identity to 'wear'[37]). Rather, the "doer" is variably constructed in and through the deed (*ibid*.: 195), and such performances take place within a highly regulated frame, restricted and limited by "existing cultural norms, laws and taboos, which constrain that taking up or 'choice'" (Salih 2004: 21). Neither is performativity a "singular or deliberative 'act', but, rather…[a] reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (Butler 1993: 2). The appearance of a stable or coherent gendered identity – that there is 'a' militarised masculine identity that must be produced – is in fact "a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief (Butler 1999: 192).

A militarised masculine subjectivity thus comes into being through its various 'performances'. Performances that are themselves not free from the matrix of gendered

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[36] Like Butler, I too do not separate 'sex' and 'gender' into two discreet categories. Working with the performative constitution of gender it should be taken that whenever the term 'gender' is used (unless otherwise stated), 'sex' is always implicit within it. Sex is not presumed to be prior to gender or vice-versa (Zalewski and Parpart 2008: 16).
[37] I borrow this analogy of gender being a clothing a subject chooses and 'wears' from Sara Salih's (2002) discussion of Butler and performativity.

norms and expectations, but through regulated processes of repetition have come to be substantiated and bounded as explicitly 'masculine'. These performances operate to inscribe gender on a militarised masculine subject and are simultaneously re-inscribed by masculine gender. This is not however, to suggest that a causal process is underway, in that a 'subject' (for there is no subject outside discourse and prior to the acts and gestures that initiate such a process) can only perform specific acts and gestures that then culminate in a set of fixed effects. To quote again from Butler, "[c]onstruction not only takes place *in* time, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms" (1993: 10, emphasis in original), and it is in the course of this reiteration that gendered identities are both produced and destabilised. For while it is as a sedimented effect of a reiterative and ritual practice that gender (and sex) acquires its naturalised effect,

> it is also by virtue of this reiteration that gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions, as that which escapes or exceeds the norm, as that which cannot be wholly defined or fixed by the repetitive labor of that norm. This instability is the *de*constituting possibility in the very process of repetition (*ibid*.: 10, emphasis in original).

It is then the very reiterative and recitational practices that work to give gendered identities the appearance of stability that simultaneously make possible their radical instability. This *de*constituting potential inherent in the process of reiteration allows for the contradictions and paradoxes within a militarised masculine subject.

THE FILLING AND FIXING OF BORDERS

That militarised masculinity can appear as a subjectivity that is fixed and coherent – one that is believed to be capable of replication and (re)production through the practices of basic training – is not however, achieved only through the (re)iteration of its 'doings': of its words, acts and gestures. Building on the work of Stern and Zalewski (2009), I would like to reflect on feminism's own implication in the (re)production of this subject.

While there has been, and remains, a real utility in using masculinities and the figure of a militarised masculine subject to think through gendered practices of war, soldiering and violence – indeed my own thinking and the research that follows is indebted to the feminist-inspired literature that has gone before me – it is my reading that scholarship on militarised masculinities works to inadvertently ontologically solidify the very subject it seeks to deconstruct. For while broad claims are made regarding the lack of fixity and instability of a militarised masculine identity, through the repetition and (re)citation of scholarship

militarised masculinity begins to take on a sedimented effect. This argument builds on that forwarded by Stern and Zalewski in their article, "Feminist Fatigue(s)", in which they use Butler's theory of performativity to argue that "feminist scholarship performatively reproduces the sexed identities and attached gendered harms it sets out to eviscerate" (2009: 615-6). Stern and Zalewski make this claim through an observation of the ease at which "generalised renditions of feminist narratives of militarisation continue to be generated…even though much of the scholarship upon which the generic storyline rests is both nuanced and rigorous" (*ibid*.: 619). Authors end up working through and within "a generalised story" (*ibid*.: 619) of militarised masculinity, with the traces of such operating to "constrain the storylines of feminist IR scholarship more generally" (*ibid*.: 619) and 'fixing' militarised masculinity to particular attributes and characteristics[38]. In short, in writing on/about militarised masculinity feminists are implicated in the (re)production and ontological solidification of the subject, despite, perhaps, their best intentions of disrupting this. The (re)iteration and (re)citation of their scholarship – even invoking 'militarised masculinity' as a subject of analysis – within a generalised story inevitably works to (re)produce that subject. To return to Butler: "Performativity describes this relation of being implicated in that which one opposes" (1993: 241).

What then is this 'generalised story', or what Stern and Zalewski call a "familiar feminist fable" (2009: 612), that works to inadvertently fix the subject? The generalised story can be found in the familiar tropes that appear within much of the scholarship on militarised masculinities. Tropes that through their linguistic reification work to reiterate and recite a familiar feminist fable that, in turn, ontologically solidifies a militarised masculine subject. Before I proceed however, a caveat: to make visible this generalised story is to not unpack and pay attention to the many nuances that make up the scholarship I have just discussed. It is not my intention here to construct a strawman – or perhaps 'straw-feminist' – argument, but rather to point to how easily a generalised rendition of soldiering identities can be generated, despite that so much of the work this generalised account rests upon points to the complexities, contradictions and fragility of militarised masculinity. In fact, like many of the authors I have discussed in this first chapter, I believe this research too will contribute to this familiar feminist fable while simultaneously working against it. Indeed I am doubtful if any feminist research on militarisation and militarised masculinities can completely avoid this

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[38] Kimberly Hutchings is worth mentioning here as a scholar who, to a large extent, avoids this generalised story in her challenge of the connections between masculinity and war. Hutchings argues that identifying war with masculinity provides conceptual resources that can authorise discriminations such as 'good' versus 'bad' war, war and peace. "At the same time, identifying masculinity with war provides a repertoire of possibilities for what masculinity may mean, which occlude the extent to which masculinity is a genuinely empty signifier" (2008: 401).

(re)articulation. Rather, what I hope this research will offer is an epistemology through which we are reminded of our own complicity in boundary-marking and the incompleteness of the generalised feminist stories we slide into, and a methodology that allows us to be attuned to and track 'moments' of this incompleteness when they emerge.

Returning to the literature previously discussed, the feminist fable and associated militarised masculine subject begins to take shape. Authors writing on militarised masculinities frequently point to the inculcation and prioritisation of particular traits within the soldier, including, "courage and endurance; physical and psychological strength; rationality; toughness; obedience; discipline; patriotism; lack of squeamishness; avoidance of certain emotions such as fear, sadness, uncertainty, guilt, remorse, and grief; and heterosexual competency" (Whitworth 2004: 160)[39]. Compounding this is the preponderance of Connell's term 'hegemonic masculinity' and her language of a hierarchy of masculinities. Both as a popularly-conceived conception of what a soldier 'is' and within the military itself, the combat soldier has come to be understood as the dominant, or hegemonic, embodiment of militarised masculinity (for example, Barrett's discussion of naval aviators). As the dominant conception of masculinity within the institution, militarised masculinity, and the military and soldiering more generally, come to be largely – or easily – defined by this combat-warrior image. Even those authors who lay their gaze away from the combat arms – and Barrett, Higate and Enloe are particularly worth mentioning here – return, in part, to the familiar feminist fable of militarised masculinity above. Enloe after all traces the performances of a virile heterosexuality amongst militarised nuclear scientists; Higate recalls administrative clerks working out in the gym in an attempt to live up to hegemonic conceptions of militarised masculinity; and as Barrett states, "[t]hroughout all communities in the Navy, the image of masculinity that is perpetuated involves physical toughness, the endurance of hardships, aggressiveness, a rugged heterosexuality, unemotional logic, and a refusal to complain" (1996: 132).

It is then, the reiterative and recitational practice of scholarship on militarised masculinities, and the generalised story it both works within and (re)produces, that operates to inadvertently ontologically solidify a specific (dominant) conception of militarised masculinity. While the generalised story set out above may ignore the nuances elicited by individual authors, that such scholarship can be located to greater or lesser degrees within this feminist fable of militarised masculinity is testament to the ease at which such stories

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[39] As well as those authors previously discussed, the following also point to the centrality of all or some of these traits: Arkin and Dobrofsky (1978); Eisenhart (1975); and Woodward and Winter (2007).

can be reverted to[40]. While those writing on militarised masculinities recognise the multiplicity and lack of fixity of the subject, the reiteration of the generalised story (which authors cannot help but work within) works to (re)map a subject's identity borders at the same time it seeks to disrupt them. It is not then, that I deny that characteristics such as aggression, violence and heterosexuality mark the bodies of militarised masculine subjects, nor that I can escape marking borders and (re)producing a subject. As Véronique Pin-Fat writes, "[d]rawing distinctions is drawing lines. Making distinctions is a feature of language and unavoidable because that's how words get their meaning" (2010: 118). Rather, what I hope to do is avoid mapping 'hard' lines around this always-shifting subject, instead offering a methodology and language that reminds us of the untidiness outside this generalised story. My use of the term 'liberal warrior' as opposed to 'militarised masculinity' is my first step in attempting to resist this generalised story, in attempting to avoid mapping hard lines around the subjectivity. The term 'liberal warrior' is meant to give notice to a very specific conceptualisation of British militarised masculinity, one that has emerged through British colonial history, contemporary practices of warfare, and Cartesian understandings of the Self. It is my hope that its use will elicit at least something of a disconnect between it and the generalised story of militarised masculinity. In my next chapter I will introduce Avery Gordon's epistemology of ghosts and hauntings as offering one such intervention, giving us a language in which to talk about the fluidity and porosity of the border – its 'ghostliness'[41]. A way in which to write or talk about the ephemeral and indistinct moments that not only remind us of the instability of the borders we map, but also a way in which to recognise that which gives notice to what is 'outside' mapped borders and follow it, and a liberal warrior's incompleteness, through multiple sites. Before this however, I want to return to understandings of militarised masculinities as performative, as an identity without a secure ontological base, and what implications this may have with regard to its association and assumed connectedness with violence.

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[40] It is also perhaps worth noting the degree and ease at which the subject 'militarised masculinity' and its elision with particular characteristics and traits has been taken on by those outside 'the academy', particularly within some policy circles concerned with international sexual exploitation and assault (for example the *Must Boys be Boys?* Report by Refugees International [2005]). This has led to others pointing to the ways in which perhaps an over-emphasis on 'militarised masculinity' has worked to obscure the prevalence of non-military perpetrators of sexual violence (for example see *The Human Security Report 2012*).

[41] Or what Pin-Fat would refer to as a "leaky" (2010: 121) border.

MYTHICAL MILITARISED MASCULINITY

To speak then of militarised masculinity as a stable, 'knowable' subjectivity is to speak of something mythical, as something impossible, and it is a thread that has been picked up by a number of authors writing on the subjectivity. Terrell Carver unpacks how an understanding of a unitary or coherent conception of militarised masculinity is a fiction, and one that is conflicted both empirically and conceptually. "Empirically, it is not the case that warrior males are made by nature; they are socially produced, and produced in infinite gradations and variety" (2008: 81). Despite particular productions of militarised masculinity becoming discursively idealised at different times and in different contexts, and used to encourage young men and women to join up, there is no singular or overarching constitution of a militarised masculine subject. Conceptually, the idealised unitary militarised masculinity is, even in theory, "weak and vulnerable; it does not take much to wound a warrior, or to damage his technology". Even without being wounded, a "masculinised human soldier (who could, of course, and in some way senses, be a woman) is a complex consciousness with all the concepts of his weak and vulnerable 'others' well within the realm of his imagination, feeling and reality" (*ibid.*: 81). A militarised masculine identity is thus multiple, weak, fragmented and haunted by the 'others' of femininity, homosexuality, fear, pain and uncertainty.

Similarly, Pin-Fat and Stern point to the way that representations of masculinity and femininity can never be complete:

> Full representation is never possible because the inside/possible must always rely on the outside/impossible for its constitution, and vice-versa. This means that what 'masculinity' or 'femininity' means will always include, by exclusion, its opposite and therefore, a clear demarcation between 'masculinity' and 'femininity' cannot be successfully maintained (Pin-Fat and Stern 2005: 29).

Pin-Fat and Stern identify this as an "(im)possible constitutive dynamic" (*ibid.*: 29), differing from understandings of gender as purely relational inasmuch as

> (im)possibility implies that what is excluded is an integral, constitutive part of that which is included. (Im)possibility highlights that any seemingly coherent representation is always an unstable configuration insofar as 'it' is constituted by, and indeed haunted by, that which is excluded. These hauntings, or constitutive outsides, are forever present (*ibid.*: 29).

Thus, while aggression, strength and heterosexuality can be viewed as integral to constructions of militarised masculinity, traits and characteristics excluded from understandings of a soldiering figure – passivity, weakness and homosexuality – haunt the

bodies and subjectivities of soldiers, and are never fully absent or exorcised. Any configuration of militarised masculinity is then always an *(im)possibility*.

If however, militarised masculinity is indeed mythical, only comes into 'being' through its acts, and is constituted not just by traits and characteristics they 'are', but also those they are 'not', then how is it possible to trace relations between this mythical, unknowable subjectivity and the violence 'it' enacts? Indeed, why research something that doesn't 'exist' in any ontological sense at all? My first response to this would be that while it may not be possible to define exactly what or who 'is' militarised masculinity, it is all too easy to point to the very 'real', the very material, militarised violences that appear as the effects of this subjectivity. Violence that is directed outwards towards the populations they are frequently claiming to protect[42], inwards to those within the military community and/or family members[43], and inwards towards themselves[44]. Sandra Whitworth refers to such external effects of the subjectivity as "*explosions*" and "*implosions*" of militarised masculinity (2004: 152, emphasis in original). Such sustained, on-going militarised violences demand feminist attention.

My second response would be that it is perhaps worth paying attention to this fragile, (im)possible subjectivity as a way of understanding how such violences become possible. Whitworth argues that *explosions* and *implosions* of militarised masculinity are both caused by and illustrate the precarious and contradictory base upon which such a subjectivity is constituted (*ibid*.: 152). For Whitworth, the military's attempt at stabilising an identity that can never be stable and fixed relies on the "constant denigration and violence directed at 'others'[45] who undermine the privileges and entitlements, the ultimately unfulfilled promises on which militarised masculinity rests" (*ibid*.: 166). However, as Paul Higate has pointed to, such an understanding can assume something of a totalising effect of military socialisation on soldiers, that military men are reduced "to little more than automatons" (2007: 115).

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[42] For example, the torture, rape and murder of Shidane Arone, a sixteen-year-old Somali boy by Canadian peacekeepers in 1993; the rape and murder of fourteen-year-old Abeer Qassim Hamza al-Janabi and her family in Iraq by American soldiers; and the murder of Baha Mousa, a 26 year old Iraqi hotel receptionist by British servicemen.

[43] For example, the 3,200 rapes and sexual assaults reported in the US military in 2011, and the estimated 19,000 that went unreported (McGreal 2012); and the murder of four military wives in 2002 by their soldier-husbands, recently returned from Afghanistan in Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

[44] For example, the growing numbers of cases of post-traumatic stress disorder within the ranks as well as high levels of drug and alcohol abuse amongst former soldiers.

[45] Whitworth identifies these 'others' as those outside the military (civilians, wives, girlfriends), within the military (those who fall outside the idealised norm of a white, heterosexual, male soldier) and within themselves (the 'feminine within' in the guise of emotions such as pain, fear and uncertainty).

Instead, just as militarised masculinity can be conceptualised as an (im)possible constitutive dynamic, so too can its relation with war and violence. Returning again to Pin-Fat and Stern,

> Addressing the connections between gender and war as relations of possibility highlights the ways in which attempts are made to create and sustain specific forms of knowledge, power, and identity in relation not only to war and gender as separate issues, but together (2005: 29).

Connections between militarised masculinity and violence are, like the subjectivity itself, radically contingent. Their relation is performative and comes into being, comes to attention, through discourses that produce the effects that they name. But as performative it simultaneously provides the opportunity for an 'unfaithful' repetition, a *de*constitution of the relation, an excess or escape of the relation. Militarised masculine subjects are not then unthinking 'automatons' dictated by discourse, rather there can be no separation of performativity and subjectivity – they are one another. Not all soldiers will rape, murder, torture, kill, but particular discourses of difference do produce militarised masculine subjects and such discourses also operate to make such violences possible. It is the research goal of this project to trace some of the specific discourses that constitute British liberal warriors and what (im)possible constitutive dynamics are at work. To ask questions about how militarised masculinity has been reconceptualised in the figure of a liberal warrior. To trace discourses of gender, race, sexuality and colonialism, and to become attuned to what has been included through its attempted exclusion. I also seek to unpack the ways in which a continuum of militarised violences is made possible; a continuum of excluded 'hauntings', discourses of denigration, and beaten, bloodied and dead bodies. Why and how do some contexts and some bodies become the sites of such violence? In what ways can we see the (re)articulation of a liberal warrior subjectivity and the discourses it is produced in and through in these sites? It is to these questions of production, violence and (im)possibility that this thesis will explore.

Representations and stories of war have been physically and conceptually dominated by masculinity, with the gender make-up of militaries fostering little critical engagement from many within the discipline of International Relations. Men join militaries because that's what they've always done, and militaries engage in violence because that's what has always happened. As this chapter has demonstrated such thinking plays into and reinforces essentialist claims of masculinity and femininity. Such accounts presume an underlying 'essence' to these gendered identities, an essence that tends to be associated with biological sex. By 'fixing' gendered identities in this way, gender is deployed as an object or variable,

ignoring the multiple and contradictory ways that gendered identities are both constructed and operate. Shifting then from understanding gender as an object to a relation, R. W. Connell has provided feminists and others interested in theorising masculinities with the language and conceptual 'tools' to think and write about multiple masculinities and their complex relations with femininities and other masculinities. The militarised masculinities literature has reflected this complicating of gender theorising, and authors writing on the identity point not to a caricatured and fixed subjectivity, but to complex, intersecting power relations and contradictory and contingent identities. A militarised masculine subject is not just the combat soldier, but can occupy the position of a 'feminised' supply corps officer, a tough and tender-hearted 'New World' warrior, and a technologically-enhanced cyborg soldier. The perceived stability of a soldiering subject has been deconstructed, and militarised masculinity revealed as an empty signifier, with no ontological status apart from the gestures, acts and deeds which constitute its reality. However, in rendering militarised masculinity radically contingent how can connections be traced and associations made between this mythical subject and the violences 'it' supposedly enacts? My chapter finishes with two responses to this; firstly, that while militarised masculinity may remain fragile, ephemeral and unknowable, its violences do not. Its violences remain a very 'real', very material, threat to populations, communities and individuals militarised masculinities are exposed to, and they demand feminist attention. Secondly, while the precariousness of the subjectivity may not indicate a causal relationship between military socialisation and violence, the discourses of difference that work to produce such subjects also make possible the sites and the range of militarised violences. It is the relations of possibility between these things that this research project wishes to explore. An attempt to draw to attention the complex and contradictory ways militarised masculine subjectivities are forged and (re)forged, and how particular bodies in particular sites are marked as sites of its violent reinscription.

CHAPTER TWO

HAUNTED SOLDIERS

If – as my first chapter asserts – a militarised masculine subject is mythical inasmuch as it has no ontological status apart from the acts that constitute its reality, and yet at the same time it is continually being rearticulated and ontologically 'solidified' through generalised stories of feminist scholarship, how can I write about and engage with the subjectivity without being implicated in that which I critique? Given the ease at which nuance and specificity can be elided into what Stern and Zalewski call a "familiar feminist fable" (2009: 612), how can I ensure their presence in the stories I tell? For if, as Pin-Fat states, "[m]aking distinctions is a feature of language" (2010: 118), then even speaking the term 'militarised masculinity' – or in my case 'liberal warrior' – will begin to draw lines and mark borders. A subject begins to take on the appearance as 'knowable' and filled with specific characteristics, behaviours and traits. This chapter seeks not to claim that such border mapping can be avoided, nor provide a way that a militarised masculine subjectivity can be emptied out – 'purified' – rather, it simultaneously confronts the impossibility of *not* filling militarised masculinity, *not* filling a liberal warrior, and reminds us of all that is left 'outside', what has been excluded. It does so through a discussion and appropriation of Avery Gordon's epistemology of ghosts and hauntings, suggesting a language in which to talk about the (im)possible constitutive dynamic of that which has been excluded, and a way to recognise that which gives notice to the incompleteness of a subject and trace its violent effects.

In her book, *Ghostly Matters*, Gordon seeks a "new way of knowing", one that is more "attuned to the echoes and murmurs of that which has been lost but which is still present among us" (Gordon 2008 [1997]: x). Claiming that the social world is haunted by 'ghosts', situated at the margins of what we believe to be representable, Gordon appeals to her readers to start paying attention to these haunting presences as they give notice to the fragility and precariousness of stories, identities and memories we may have once considered stable and complete. It will be by paying attention to these ghostly matters, allowing them to distract us from a generalised story, and recognising them as apparitions of a haunting, that paradoxes inherent within a liberal warrior are revealed. Like Marysia Zalewski in her discussion of Gordon's work in relation to the possibility of searching out 'a' feminist

methodology, it is not my intention to simply reiterate and "apply" Gordon's epistemology of hauntings (2006: 44). Rather, drawing predominantly on Gordon, but supported by Wendy Brown's (2001) appropriations of Derrida's 'hauntology' and the methodological work of Zalewski (2006) and Lather (2007), I take insights gained from their work to think through how ghosts and hauntings may provide a methodological intervention into the ways in which militarised masculine subjectivities are made sense of and unpacked.

My use of hauntings however, does not only serve as a reminder of the (im)possibility of a stable subjectivity. It is by becoming attuned to ghosts and hauntings that connections can be made between spectacular militarised violences and banal, mundane, everyday 'doings' of soldiering life. Building on a burgeoning feminist scholarship and discussed in my previous chapter, militarised masculinities have been shown to come into being through the making of distinctions and marking of borders, or to use the language of Gordon, through the (attempted) expulsion and/or concealment of hauntings. By taking notice of these haunting aspects of subjectivity, both their always already presence (and absence)[46], and the ways in which these hauntings materialise, militarised violences can be traced through multiple sites. Before a discussion of what hauntings are sought to be exorcised from a liberal warrior subjectivity and what violences are rendered possible, there will now be an engagement with Gordon's and others' work on hauntings, my own appropriation of it, and what is at stake in paying attention to ghosts.

A METHODOLOGY OF GHOSTS AND HAUNTINGS

The belief that it is possible – or even desirable – to capture the/a/any subject through language, through drawing lines and making distinctions is to ignore the "so many ways of being in the world…[to ignore] so many overlapping practices of subjectivity that each persona enacts and is subject to" (Pin-Fat 2010: 128), and it is this refusal of 'capture' that Gordon's ghosts and hauntings provide a methodology for. Dissatisfied with the inability of social sciences' normal methods and available critical vocabularies to recognise the "exclusions and the sacrifices required to tell a story as the singularly real one" (Gordon 2008: 42), Gordon argues there is a need to preoccupy ourselves with what has been lost. How certain individuals, things or ideas, have been rendered marginal, excluded or repressed

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[46] An 'always already' presence (and absence) is neatly distilled in Pin-Fat and Stern's "(im)possible constitutive dynamic" (2005: 29). Elsewhere Pin-Fat has pointed to the always already nature of making distinctions and drawing lines, writing, "no exorcism can banish the ghost of the other that haunts it" (2010: 121); "they are co-dependent and co-constitutive. One cannot be without the other. They include each other by exclusion" (*ibid.*: 120).

(*ibid.*: viii). It is through an appeal for her readers to start recognising the 'ghostly matters' that trouble us at every turn that Gordon believes these exclusions and sacrifices can be rendered visible. Haunting, Gordon claims, is a constituent feature of contemporary modern life (*ibid.*: 7), and she uses the term to describe the ways in which the lived realities of social lives fail to be explained by current social and cultural analysis. Drawing on Raymond Williams' (1977) concept of a 'structure of feeling', Gordon describes the ways in which hauntings refer to the "*un*-visible" (Gordon 2008: 17, emphasis in original) and unspoken – but vibrantly 'real' and present – socialities that fall outside mapped and fixed social forms.

Williams points to the ways in which "[i]n most description and analysis, culture and society are expressed in an habitual past tense…[an] immediate and regular conversion of experience into finished products" (1977: 128). By converting

> relationships, institutions and formations in which we are still actively involved…into formed wholes rather than forming and formative processes…[a]nalysis is then centred on relations between these produced institutions, formations, and experiences, so that now…only the fixed explicit forms exist, and living presence is always, by definition, receding (*ibid.*: 128).

As the social becomes "fixed and explicit" (*ibid.*: 128), and "the 'complexities, the experienced tensions, shifts and uncertainties, the intricate forms of unevenness and confusion' are set against the reductions as their aberrant supplements, then…they disappear from social analysis altogether" (Gordon 2008: 199). Where, Gordon asks, "do these complexities and tensions and confusions go? As social analysis flees from recognizing their very sociality, these complexities and tensions do not just disappear or become silent or become settled into an asocial unconscious" (*ibid.*: 199). As Williams states, the alternative to the received and produced fixed forms is not silence" (1977: 131). Rather, a "structure of feeling 'articulates presence' as the tangled exchange of noisy silences and seething absences. Such a tangle…is haunting. And haunting describes…just those 'experiences to which the fixed forms do not speak at all, which…they do not recognize'" (Gordon 2008: 200).

Gordon then uses the term 'haunting' to describe the lived experiences of social lives that fail to be explained by current social and cultural analysis. Specifically, and made clear in a 2011 follow-up article to her book, "[h]aunting was the language and the experiential modality" (Gordon 2011: 2) through which Gordon attempted to "understand and write evocatively about some of the ways that modern forms of dispossession, exploitation and repression concretely impact the lives of the people most affected by them and impact our shared conditions of living" (*ibid.*: 1). For Gordon, "haunting is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life, especially

when they are over and done with…or when their oppressive nature is continuously denied" (*ibid.*:2). For example, in her discussion of Luisa Valenzuela's 1977 magical realist novella *Como en la Guerra* (As in War)[47], which deals with the 'disappeared' of state-sponsored terror in Argentina during the 'dirty war', Gordon writes about how "disappearance, worked by haunting and by creating a haunted society in which the disappeared still wander, leaving almost everything of this modernization project unresolved" (Gordon 2008: 200). Similarly, in her discussion of Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* – which Gordon describes as "one of the most significant contributions to the understanding of haunting" (*ibid.*: 139) – she writes that Morrison not only shows us

> that Slavery was violent and exploitative…but also that even when it was supposed to be over, it could return to haunt the living, forcing them to coexist with ghosts in a very real material way…making Reconstruction and the 'freedoms' it passes on to us today our haunting inheritance (*ibid.*: 200).

For Gordon therefore a haunting "is an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known, sometimes very directly, sometimes more obliquely" (Gordon 2011: 2).

Gordon claims that hauntings occur on the terrain situated between our ability to conclusively describe the logic of a social form "and the various experiences of this logic, experiences that are more often than not partial, coded, symptomatic, contradictory, ambiguous" (2008: 24). 'Logic' here can be understood as borders drawn that map a militarised masculine subject – the expected, anticipated, predicted behaviours of the subject. Whether it is the strength, aggression and physical endurance of a combat soldier, or the technical capability, high pressure and risk-taking of an intelligence officer, particular gendered traits are assumed generalised or 'logical' to the subject under production. However, experiences of this so-called 'logic' are always tempered by those experiences that fall outside the marked boundaries: by failings, distortions and aberrations. Wendy Brown, in her discussion of Derrida's 'logic of haunting', points to ambiguities and uncertainties as notifications of a haunting taking place: "…haunting occurs at the point of uncertainty about the meaning of an event, an utterance, a gesture… To be haunted by something is to feel ourselves disquieted or disorientated by it" (2001: 152). The mapping of borders will always mean ghostly matters at the margins, ambiguities and uncertainties 'within'. Haunting is therefore both an announcement of an apparent absence, while simultaneously articulating a seething presence. It is something that "makes its mark by being there and not there at the same time" (Gordon 2008: 6). It is to these 'present absences', *un*-visibilities and things that

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[47] Translated into English in 1979 as *He Who Searches.*

are seemingly not there, that Gordon wishes us to pay attention to and use as a basis for a new way of understanding the social world.

Building on Gordon's and Brown's understandings of hauntings as something that disrupts, troubles and signals incompleteness, and Pin-Fat and Stern's understanding of the (im)possible constitutive dynamic of gender representations, I understand hauntings as the constitutive outside. As – in this case – all that falls outside the mapped boundaries of a liberal warrior, as all that is (attempted to be) excluded in order for a subjectivity to appear as stable and complete. However, as Pin-Fat and Stern point to, that which has been excluded "is an integral, constitutive part of that which is included" (2005: 29). Hauntings both constitute and disrupt, they cannot be fully expelled or exorcised because they are inextricable from what is being produced. As always already present (and absent) these hauntings disrupt, encroach and trouble that which lies within the borders, they render a subject precarious and unstable. Importantly however, hauntings, like that which they disrupt, are not secure and knowable themselves, they too shift and change. Hauntings not only trouble and disturb the border, but also move in and out of it. Gestures, acts and deeds that may at once have been considered excluded and 'outside' a liberal warrior subjectivity, are capable of being included and co-opted within. Herein lies the dynamism of hauntings, like the subjectivity they haunt, they too are ultimately nebulous, formless, and without a known and steady 'shape'. A haunting therefore is not simply a liberal warrior's 'Other' – although this is not to claim that a liberal warrior's Other cannot or does not haunt – as this would operate to stabilise that which is outside a liberal warrior; it would give shape and a certain knowingness to that which haunts. In stabilising what a liberal warrior is not, borders of the subject itself are (re)traced and afforded fixity. Hauntings, in short, are what ensure (im)possibility and are (im)possible themselves. They simultaneously constitute and disrupt, are both 'within' and 'outside', and are visible and *un*-visible.

Hauntings therefore are impossible to get a 'hold' of. They cannot be grasped and made 'stable' by those searching for them. They are those things – those 'uncanny' experiences, emotions and actions – that are outside generalised stories of militarised masculinity and outside borders mapped around a liberal warrior subjectivity. They are what have been forgotten, ignored or concealed through the ease at which we (re)tell and (re)produce familiar feminist fables of militarism and masculinity, as well as their own shapelessness and difficulty in grasping. Hauntings are not invisible, it is not that they cannot be 'seen' and revealed. Indeed, often the incompleteness, the lack of fixity, is all out in the

open for the 'seeing'. Rather, hauntings are obscured, rendered *un*-visible, through a failure to pay due attention to the signs – the *ghosts* – that tell us they are taking place. However, whether we pay them attention or not, hauntings will have 'real' material, and sometimes violent, effects on that which we study. Taking up Gordon's appeal then, there is a responsibility to start becoming attuned to hauntings and to become comfortable with the uncertainty and confusions they bring.

DISTRACTING GHOSTS

"Haunting", Gordon claims, "raises specters". "These specters or ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained or repressed or blocked from view" (2011: 2). Thus, "[i]f haunting describes how that which appears to be not there is often a seething presence, acting on and often meddling with taken-for-granted realities, the ghost is just the sign…that tells you a haunting is taking place" (Gordon 2008: 8). Ghosts are "one form by which something lost, or barely visible, or seemingly not there to our supposedly well-trained eyes, makes itself known or apparent to us" (*ibid.*: 8). Gordon makes it clear that ghosts are not "the invisible or the unknown or the constitutively unknowable", rather, "the whole essence, if you can use that word, of a ghost is that it has a real presence and demands its due, demands your attention" (2011: 2).

Like Gordon, I too conceptualise ghosts as being concrete, material – as having 'real' presence'. However – and reflecting my specific understanding of hauntings – what I understand a ghost as giving notice to is the constitutively unknowable: the haunting constitutive outside with all its formlessness, shapelessness and instability. As the materialisation of an aspect of a haunting, a ghost gives the opportunity to trace the effects of a haunting, and the multitude of ways it has operated to trouble and disrupt. When a ghost appears therefore we must allow it to distract us, let it 'demand our attention'. By doing so hauntings that had been concealed, rendered *un*-visible, will be revealed to be very much present. A haunting however, must not be reduced to the appearance of a ghost, and likewise the opposite. As shifting, ephemeral, formless, a haunting cannot be neatly captured or embodied by the emergence of a ghost. A ghost does not fully or completely represent or reflect a haunting – they are not one and the same. Rather, a ghost operates to give notice to the fact a haunting is taking place. It remains up to us to uncover and detail the haunting, to reveal its multitude of effects.

Gordon recalls her own experience of encountering a ghost: of being on her way to a conference to give a paper but getting distracted by the traces of a woman ghost. The ghost in Gordon's story is that of Sabina Spielrein, a female psychoanalyst who is absent from a photograph of the Third Psychoanalytic Congress that took place at Weimar in September 1911. Gordon notes that she would not have found her at all had she not "stumbled upon her by accident" in a book, entitled *A Secret Symmetry*, that "tells a somewhat remarkable story of her [Spielrein] as a link, a point of exchange, between two great men" (*ibid*.: 32)[48]. With a desire to know more, Gordon begins to search for the traces of Spielrein's ghost and by doing so, Gordon "traces the institutional markings of heterosexual desire within an intellectual enterprise, within the institution of psychoanalysis itself", as well as tracing the making of a ghost, Spielrein (*ibid*.: 39-40). Spielrein then, is the ghost that draws our attention to the ways in which the institute of psychoanalysis is haunted, as well as haunting Freud's seminal work on the death instinct. Allowing herself to be distracted by this ghost, and following the traces Spielrein has left behind, Gordon finds a different story of psychoanalysis. A story that reveals the way in which a woman "changed the early history of psychoanalysis" (*ibid*.: 32); a story of that same woman becoming a psychoanalyst herself, and a story that traces the making of that female psychoanalyst into a ghost.

Gordon's ghost – Spielrein – materialises somewhat paradoxically in her complete absence from a photograph. Similarly, the Argentinean 'disappeared' haunt through their lack of presence. While in Morrison's *Beloved* it is the appearance of an actual ghost – the baby a slave woman, Sethe, killed when her slave owners attempt to return her to Kentucky under the terms of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act – that signals the haunting presence of slavery. However, while hauntings I uncover and trace may be *un*-visible and concealed, the ghosts that give notice to them in the pages that follow are not. Nor are they absent or in any way supernatural. Rather, ghosts that appear in this thesis are concrete; they are 'real'. Ghosts will appear as the spectacular – "in the revelatory power of the [apparent] exception" (Pin-Fat and Stern 2005: 29) – and demand attention, and they will materialise in the everyday. Both appearances will raise questions about stories we've been told, borders we have mapped. The ghosts that appear and are written about in this thesis are sometimes violent: they are abusive; they are embodied in bloodied and beaten corpses; and they are the mutilation and barbarism of war. They are however, not always violent. Ghosts also

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[48] The two "great men" in question are the famous psychoanalysts Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud. Jung was both Spielrein's analyst and her lover, and Freud both their confidant. Gordon points out that once cured of the 'nervous disorder' that first sent Spielrein to Jung, Spielrein then earns a doctorate in Psychoanalysis herself and writes about the "death drive ten years before Freud published his seminal work on the death instinct, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920)" (Gordon 2008: 34).

materialise in the mundane, the banal, the simply 'uncanny'. They can materialise in the way a soldier washes and dresses him/herself; in photos displayed on soldiers' walls and their social drinking games; as well as in the language of 'hearts and minds' and a kinder, gentler form of soldiering. This thesis will aim to reveal the ways in which such violent and mundane materialisations are not so far separated from one another as they may at first appear. Hauntings after all are not violent or dangerous in and of themselves. It is not hauntings that cause the external violent effects of a militarised masculine subjectivity, but rather the fact they have been expelled and the effort it takes to maintain this expulsion.

BECOMING ATTUNED TO GHOSTS AND HAUNTINGS

In order to become attuned to ghosts and the hauntings they give notice to, two questions may be asked: first, whereabouts should ghostly matters be searched for? And secondly, how can we recognise a ghost as a ghost and thus a sign of a haunting? I will address both these questions in turn. To begin, hauntings, it has already been noted, do not merely disturb, they make us and the social realities in which we live. Thus, to search for their ghostly materialisations is to find them always already there. In every discourse, every performance and every generalised story there will be hauntings and the materialisation of ghosts. There are hauntings and the appearance of ghosts in the most routine behaviours and unthinking actions. Indeed, this is part of the reason they can often be so easily ignored or simply go unnoticed. Hauntings are never simply 'outside', in opposition to, or o/Other than, that which they haunt – hauntings *are* what they haunt. Integral and forever present to an (im)possible liberal warrior subject, becoming attuned to hauntings requires no extra searching. A liberal warrior, their training, deployment and everyday enactments, will be full of hauntings and the appearance of ghosts.

If then hauntings are always occurring and ghosts always materialising, it is the second question that must be turned to: how do we recognise a ghost as a ghost and thus a sign of haunting? What do we need to be attuned to so we don't end up ignoring – exorcising – the ghost, returning instead to the safety and comfort of a generalised story and neatly mapped borders? Furthermore, what can we expect to happen when we pay attention to ghosts and become aware of hauntings?

Gordon identifies three characteristic features of hauntings and the ghosts that give notice to them. Firstly, Gordon notes that a "ghost imports a charged strangeness into the place or sphere it is haunting, thus unsettling…lines that delimit a zone of activity or

knowledge" (Gordon 2008: 63). The appearance of a ghost will thus confuse or trouble borders mapping a liberal warrior subjectivity. It will make certain claims or particular assumptions difficult to maintain. Gordon states that she came to write about ghosts, not through an interest "in the occult or parapsychology, but because ghostly things kept cropping up and messing up other tasks I was trying to accomplish" (*ibid.*: 7-8)[49]. In attempts to study or 'know' a particular social phenomena then, we must pay attention to experiences that do not make sense, do not 'fit', within the borders of knowledge and understanding we, or others, have mapped. To not, for example, ignore or dismiss as a mere 'quirk' the homoerotic or hypersexualised behaviours of soldiers we had understood as aggressively heterosexual, and instead pay close attention to these troubling, 'uncanny' behaviours, these ghostly materialisations[50]. When a ghost manifests, borders that once appeared secure – of the heteronormativity of a soldier and the heterosexuality of his actions – are disturbed and ruptured by the strangeness that is attached to such an appearance. The assumed, the known, the taken-for-granted within such borders is thus rendered strange and unfamiliar; its completeness is undone.

Secondly, while "the ghost is primarily a symptom of what is missing… From a certain vantage point the ghost also simultaneously represents a future possibility" (*ibid.*: 63-4). While the ghost is the sign that tells you a haunting is taking place, as it directs your attention to the *un*-visible experiences, things and people who have been banished to the margins of social analysis, a "something to be done" also emerges from the ghostly materialisation. That a ghost demands your attention and that it produces a 'something-to-be-done' is integral to Gordon's conceptualisation of haunting. However, this "transition from being troubled [haunted]…to doing something else" (*ibid.*: 202) can only occur through the encountering of, and engaging with, a ghost. Specifically, Gordon requires that the ghost is treated "respectfully", and that "its desires [are] broached" rather than it being "ghosted or abandoned or disappeared again in the act of dealing with haunting" (Gordon 2011: 3). What Gordon understands as 'respect' can be explored by giving a little more detail to one of her examples of haunting and ghosts: that of the 'disappeared' during Argentina's 'dirty war'.

State-sanctioned disappearance is a method of control that requires calculation. "Everyone must know just enough to be terrified, but not enough either to have a clear

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[49] Gordon's 'distraction' by Sabina Spielrein is one such example of the interruptive and distracting nature of a ghost.
[50] My third chapter will engage with specific examples of such homoerotic behaviours amongst British troops.

sense of what is going on or to acquire the proof that is usually required by legal tribunals or other governments to sanction" (Gordon 2008: 110). The 'Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo' – "middle-aged women, mostly housewives with no political experience, who met while searching for their children in the various waiting rooms of the Interior Ministry" (*ibid.*: 108) – not only launched the first (and for a long time the only) illegal public protest against the Argentinian regime, but, Gordon claims, they also launched a political response formed on the ground of haunting and engagement with ghosts. In April 1977 the Mothers staged their first protest by walking "quietly in a circle around the Plaza de Mayo"[51]. They carried posters with enlarged photographs of their missing children, or wore photographs attached to their clothing with pins. "This was to be the start of their weekly Thursday demonstrations…formed first to find their disappeared children and then later to demand the end of military authority and economic repression and to fight for a radical transformation of Argentine society" (Gordon 2008: 108-9). Gordon argues that through the Mothers' protest and holding of photographs, contact was made with the disappeared and the ghost was engaged with. Contact was made not only in the very direct way of faces in the photographs corresponding to faces of the disappeared, but also in the "radiant flicker of promise that the ghostly shadow of the disappeared illuminates". The Mothers had the capacity to see in the face of the disappeared, or in a photo of a face, not only the ghost of the state's brutal authority, but also the ghost of the utopian impulse the state had tried to repress (*ibid.*: 128): that of "the desire and drive to create a just and equitable world" (*ibid.*: 127). This is what 'respecting the ghost' looks like for Gordon. It means engaging with ghosts directly – placing photographs of the disappeared on posters and walking outside the centre of Argentine authority – but also paying attention to their 'future possibility', their signalling to "the world we have now and the world we could have instead" (*ibid.*: 127). A ghost therefore both "registers *and* it incites" (*ibid.*: 207, emphasis in original); it both calls attention to what is missing and has the potential to start a process of addressing this absence and concealment.

For me however, it is not a ghost, but hauntings, that I appeal to be treated 'respectfully'. Hauntings, as that which fall outside mapped borders, their formlessness and shapelessness, their ephemeral qualities, are the place of possibility and of imagining and doing otherwise. Hauntings represent countless alternatives, multiple ways of becoming and refusals of fixity. Meanwhile, in my appropriation, while ghosts materialise as giving notice to these possibilities, these hauntings, they do so only when such hauntings have been (attempted to be) mapped out and closed down. Ghosts therefore emerge as signs not just

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[51] The centre of state authority in Argentina.

of that which haunts, but also of the closure or refusal of possibility and difference. Furthermore, in this thesis, ghosts will sometimes materialise violently and violent manifestations are not something I want to 'respect'. Respecting hauntings means being open to the confusion and uncertainty they bring to lines that have been mapped around identities, stories told and ways of thinking. It means not trying to stop what haunts, ignore it, or include it in a more 'acceptable' or tempered form. Instead it means inviting hauntings in, allowing yourself to become perplexed, lost and unsure of what you thought you were doing, of the story you're telling, or even whom you think you are. By doing so, the paradoxical feature of haunting is revealed: that while haunting always harbours the violence and denial that makes the ghost appear in the first place, it simultaneously harbours the potential for, and possibility of, imagining otherwise and doing differently. 'Respecting' hauntings thus reveals violences at work in the exclusion, concealment and rendering *un-visible* of particular experiences, things and people, but also offers the possibility of disrupting these practices by placing them at the centre of analysis.

Returning then to Gordon's three characteristics of hauntings and the ghosts that give notice to them. Gordon ends by stating the ghost is alive and we are in relation to it (*ibid.*: 64). A ghost is 'alive' inasmuch as it is the material – and sometimes violent – effect of a haunting. A ghost is relational through the co-constitutionality that underlies all hauntings. While people, objects, experiences and memories excluded from the generalised stories told and boundaries mapped, reappear as, or are given notice by, ghosts, they are also central to the constructing of the very thing they have been expelled from. Gordon writes that ghosts "have a determining agency on the ones they are haunting", making lives, experiences and memories "just what they are at any given moment" (*ibid.*: 201). In this thesis, the materialisation of a ghost will disrupt and trouble stories told about a liberal warrior and the borders drawn around it. Ghosts therefore profoundly affect and constitute what a liberal warrior 'is' in that moment and the ways in which the subjectivity is conceptualised. Ghosts however, are also relational to me, the researcher, through their ability to distract and disrupt, through their shaping of my analysis, and their leading of me to places I would not have otherwise gone. During this research project, paying attention to ghosts that materialised radically shifted my focus and continually troubled borders I had begun to map. Ghosts then "are never innocent" (*ibid.*: 22), never passive. They will construct your research in ways you may not have intended, and give notice to the always already troubling presence of hauntings. To take notice of ghosts is an active experience. Ghosts will lead you elsewhere, they will reveal to you things you have not heeded before. The materialisation of ghosts is the way in which something that has been excluded, repressed or concealed makes

itself apparent to us and unsettles the boundaries of our knowledge. By paying attention to ghosts that appear in the (re)production of liberal warrior subjectivities we are reminded that the boundaries we map around them are always incomplete, always liable to be disrupted. Ghosts give notice to that which haunts, to the encroachment of all that has attempted to be expelled. They provide an indication of the messiness 'outside', and the impossibility of drawing and maintaining neat borders around a liberal warrior.

To recognise ghosts as ghosts, is to pay attention to the appearance or materialisation of something that is unusual or uncanny, as something that does not 'fit' with the stories being told and the boundaries that are attempted to be upheld. A ghost however, will not only confuse or disrupt you in its emergence but, if the haunting it signifies is 'respected', it will also open up new possibilities, give the opportunity for you to go elsewhere, and take your research to unexpected locations. Ghosts then are those appearances that stop you unexpectedly, which grab your attention, but then propel you forward, albeit in a different direction.

Starting elsewhere, taking detours and getting lost

How then can I ensure my own research recognises ghosts and treats the hauntings they give notice to 'respectfully'? That I do not abandon them in the act of revealing them? That I do not explain away a ghost's materialisation, co-opt it within borders, or map it out and render *un*-visible the hauntings they signify? Gordon argues that "a case of a ghost…is a case of the difference it makes to start with the marginal, with what we normally exclude or banish, or, more commonly, with what we never even notice" (*ibid.*: 24-5). To start therefore with the mundane, the banal, those everyday practices, gestures, acts and deeds that have been ignored or simply taken for granted. These will include stories of homoerotic or hypersexual play by recruits, of the growing of hair and beards against regulations, and the language of 'hearts and minds'. However, as will become apparent, the ghosts in this thesis are not always those that 'we never even noticed'. When ghosts violently materialise – in abuse, embodied as bruised and broken corpses, and in the bloody after-effects of an explosion of an improvised explosive device – they are impossible to ignore or exclude. They become the only thing we notice. While impossible to ignore, such ghostly materialisations do not guarantee either recognition or respect for the hauntings they signify. For while these ghosts may not be ignored or banished away, their hauntings may be 'ghosted' all over again through their materialisation as appearing to emerge in complete

isolation to other ghostly appearances and with no attachment to always already hauntings. There is always therefore a need to not only be attuned to the appearance of ghosts, but to track them and the hauntings they signify through multiple sites, multiple emergences, resisting attempts at treating them as a 'one off' or an aberration, and render visible connections between them.

Paying attention to the marginal or refusing to view the ghost as anomaly are not the only ways of ensuring 'respect' for hauntings. Using insights gained through her own reading of *Ghostly Matters*, Marysia Zalewski uses "the practice and metaphor of 'distraction' as a methodological device" in order to destabilise the epistemological, ontological and methodological master-narratives of the discipline of International Relations (2006: 44). Rather than sticking to conventional methodological processes and their "ineptitude in communicating the depth, density, and intricacies of social life" (*ibid.*: 52), Zalewski suggests allowing ourselves instead to get distracted by those practices operating on the sidelines, or at the margins, of our research. "Being distracted invokes the lost thoughts, the glimpsed insights, the forgotten moments, the things that seemed to matter once, even if fleetingly…and the luminous, weighty presence of the apparently invisible" (*ibid.*: 52). Allowing ourselves to get distracted means the barely visible "underside of knowledge – the production and maintenance of 'ignorance/forgetting'" can be unpacked (*ibid.*: 55). Echoing Gordon, Zalewski points to the absent, the *un*-visible and the forgotten as locations where distractions lie and detours lead. Zalewski identifies the numerous and varied ways feminist research has paid attention to what wasn't there, has allowed itself to be distracted by "[t]he insignificant, barely visible markers and traces of gender and sex, the 'spectral secrets'" (*ibid.*: 54). It was, after all, Cynthia Enloe "paying attention to what she 'didn't notice', rather than swatting away conventionally insignificant distractions, [that] has led to the development of her impressive body of scholarship, which is of profound importance to feminist and IR scholars" (*ibid.*: 53).

Starting with the marginal, paying attention to ghosts, and allowing ourselves to be distracted and taking detours from what we expected to find are all ways of taking us away from the more 'traditional' methodologies[52] of International Relations and the social sciences more generally. By following such diversions a researcher is likely to find themselves in unexpected sites and locations, far away from 'common-sense' answers. Such confusion however, is what the feminist Patti Lather actively seeks from her own

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[52] For a particularly "extreme" (Zalewski 2006: 46) or "parodic" (Bleiker cited in Zalewski 2006: 46) example of the 'traditional' methodological path see King, Keohane and Verba (1994) and Robert Keohane (1998).

methodology. Lather suggests a methodology of 'getting lost': one that "denies the 'comfort text' that maps easily onto our usual ways of making sense" and creates a "messy text" (2007: 136). The move towards 'getting lost' "endorse[s] [the] complexity, partial truths, and multiple subjectivities" (*ibid*.: 136) of lived experiences, and acknowledges that a "straightforward story has become impossible" (*ibid*.: 144). Such a methodology takes seriously Gordon's expression that "life is complicated" (2008: 3). A statement that both Gordon and Zalewski point to as appearing as "a banal expression of the obvious, but it is nonetheless a profound theoretical statement – perhaps the most important theoretical statement of our time" (*ibid*.: 3).

Paying attention to the ghostly matters of a liberal warrior and allowing distractions and detours will not result in the production of a stable subject. Even the very process of becoming attuned to ghosts and revealing hauntings requires a researcher to leave behind the 'comfort texts' of fixed personhoods and an untroubled ability to 'know'. Like Lather and her search for confusion in research and a 'messy text', and Zalewski's search for ghostly distractions, my appropriation of Gordon's *Ghostly Matters* will lead to an epistemology and methodology that does not produce fixed, stable and 'known' research of social forms. In its place is a methodology that produces partial, complex and open knowledge of a militarised masculine subject. A methodology and language that serves to point to the instability, porosity and ghostliness of the boundaries my research draws. This failure to fully or completely 'write' the researched subject elicits an experience of that subject's failure to fully or completely become or 'be' a liberal warrior. The very doing of the research troubles the ease at which ontological solidification of the subject takes place. There can be no absolute representation of a liberal warrior subject, nor can there be any sure ways of producing research on such a partial and incomplete subject of study. That which I seek to study or 'write' will always be interrupted by the appearance of ghosts and disrupted by haunting presences of that which has been excluded.

'Getting lost' can therefore refer to both methodology and to modes of representation. To get lost in how we research and ways of representing that research, is to engage with something other than command, control and mastery (Lather 2007: 11). By paying attention to the ghosts and allowing them to distract me and take me on detours, borders mapping a liberal warrior remain unfixed and messy. Such an epistemology and methodology allows us to understand a militarised masculine subject as multiple, performatively constituted and always in a process of 'becoming'. Its language serves to remind us of the impossibility of a stable and coherent militarised masculinity, while

'tracking' and revealing hauntings in multiple sites. Where other methodologies may clean up "all traces of this unruliness" – all the messiness outside neatly mapped lines and outside a generalised story – "[t]he detour picks up…where abstractions leave off" (Gordon 2008: 41). The methodology also gives notice to the (im)possible constitutive dynamic of that which haunts and is haunted: that what is excluded not only troubles but is an integral, constitutive part of the subject. That we cannot study or make sense of a militarised masculine subject without always already having to make sense, comprehend, pay attention and address those things it is 'not'. Thus, in order to begin to understand a liberal warrior and its relation with violence, an engagement is needed with that which the subjectivity excludes and denies.

To summarise: dissatisfied with the social sciences normal methods and available critical vocabularies to recognise "the exclusions and the sacrifices required to tell a story as the singularly real one" (Gordon 2008: 42), Gordon appeals to her readers to start paying attention to hauntings and the 'ghostly matters' that trouble us at every turn. Using insights gained from Gordon's work, I will use the term 'hauntings' in this thesis to indicate all that has attempted to be expelled, left 'outside', borders mapped around a liberal warrior subjectivity. Hauntings are the constitutive outside: something that both troubles and disrupts, while simultaneously being integral to its constitution. As the constitutive outside, hauntings – like the subjects they disrupt – are without shape or form, they elude capture. Ghosts, as the concrete materialisations of an aspect of a haunting, are what give notice to a haunting taking place, appearing in the mundane, the banal, the everyday, and at times, in spectacular violence. It is my responsibility as the researcher of this project to pay attention to these ghosts when they appear, be attuned to the hauntings they gesture towards, and pay attention to connections between them. If I allow them to, ghosts have the potential to distract me from what I originally thought I was searching for and take me on a detour. Detours that will lead away from closed and 'finished with' generalised stories, away from neatly mapped borders, and detours that lead to open and messy social experiences. Becoming attuned to ghosts and hauntings is not an 'easy' epistemological or methodological commitment; it will not provide this research with a 'comfort text' of completed answers and neat conclusions. Rather, going on a 'ghost hunt' is profoundly destabilising, for when ghosts lead to hauntings there can be no sure knowledge, no neatly mapped boundaries. Becoming attuned to hauntings means paying attention to both the mundane and the spectacular, and recognising they may indeed not be so far separated. It

means not accepting easy answers that tie up loose ends, or taking those 'uncanny' moments as unconnected or simply an aberration. In short, my use of ghosts and hauntings in this piece of work embraces and confronts head on "[t]hat life is complicated" (*ibid.*: 3).

SUCCESSFUL FAILURES

Returning now to the reiterative and recitational practice of scholarship and the inadvertent ontological solidification of a militarised masculine subject. My own research – the discourses I unpack, my reading of texts, ghosts and hauntings I give notice to – will inevitably become another site of a liberal warrior's (re)enactment and (re)production. It will mould 'him' (for surely the subject produced will be a 'he'), and shape him, and become part of the feminist-militarised-masculinity-canon, the generalised story, a 'familiar feminist fable'. This will take place despite the attention I pay to hauntings and despite my attempts to explore elsewhere, and consider o/Otherwise. This is the paradox of reconstructing in attempts at deconstructing – a paradox reflected in the (im)possible constitutive dynamic, whereby that which is excluded is included through its exclusion. Stern and Zalewski address this irresolvable paradox, viewing it through the conceptual framework of an aporia that "can never be successfully resolved" (2009: 620). Citing Anthony Burke, an aporia is described as "a contradiction which can[not] be brought into the dialectic, smoothed over and resolved into the unity of the concept, but an untotalisable problem at the heart of the concept, disrupting its trajectory, emptying out its fullness, opening out its closure" (*ibid.*: 620). It is in this sense and as part of "feminism's complex and contradictory entanglement in academic knowledge production" (Wiegman 1999: 122) that my own 'feminist fable' will fail.

While I will go on to discuss Stern and Zalewski's re-conceptualisation of failure as not a negative impasse, but as offering political possibility, I want to first offer my own defence of my 'failed' appropriation of Gordon's insights. Becoming attuned to ghostly matters and paying attention to the hauntings of feminist scholarship is not enough – nor is there anything that can be 'enough' – to avoid drawing lines and marking boundaries around a militarised masculine subject. Given that a militarised masculine subject has no ontological status apart from the acts, gestures and deeds which constitute its reality, it will be performatively (re)enacted through scholarship that (re)articulates and (re)citates those very constituting performances. Thus, even telling marginal stories, starting elsewhere, or giving notice to ghosts and hauntings, will not ensure a liberal warrior militarised masculinity remains unbordered and radically open; there will always be a who, where and how of

construction. A subject will be (re)produced through its articulation as a proper object of study, through "methodological priorities, critical genealogies, and research questions" (Wiegman 2004: 172). However, if to tell stories is to draw lines, and to use language is to make distinctions, then the alternative is to not: to not write, to not analyse, to not engage and to not critique. What my appropriation of Gordon's epistemology of hauntings offers is a way in which to take notice of ghostly materialisations that indicate towards the incompleteness of stories told and borders mapped. It refuses the seductions of neatness and comfort that are so easily and so unthinkingly returned to in generalised stories, and recognises that what is being demarcated is always already troubled by, and including, that 'thing', that haunting, that has been left outside. Furthermore, my specific understanding of ghosts as the manifestations of hauntings gives a way in which to track a liberal warrior's hauntings through multiple sites, identifying relations between them, and the (sometimes violent) appearance of ghosts. Despite, or perhaps because of, their 'failings' then, ghosts and hauntings provide real utility as a critical resource.

Stern and Zalewski want to challenge a "notion of failure as something inherently bad, disappointing, [and] poorly executed" (2009: 620). Such an understanding of failure – and the understanding that feminism is failing in this way – "fits snugly within the thrall of current logics inhabiting western neo-liberal institutions which imply failure is the result of 'miscalculation' or 'mismanagement', neatly eviscerating any sense of 'institutional and rhetorical embedding of bourgeois, white, masculinist, and heterosexual super-ordination'" (*ibid*.: 620). Instead, it is through feminism's constitutive failure in its projects, and my own feminist project's failure in 'fully' dismantling a liberal warrior, that Stern and Zalewski find possibilities. Firstly, "[r]efracted through the conceptual framework of aporias", the failure to surpass the inhering paradox of deconstruction/reconstruction, "further disclose[s] the frantic and violent composition of disciplinary demands to produce the impossible: usable sure knowledge" (*ibid*.: 629). There can be no way of ever fully 'knowing' or unpacking a militarised masculine subject, in our attempts to do so we inevitably and inadvertently end up (re)constituting 'him' in some way. Secondly, despite the ease at which a generalised story can be told and nuance, complexity and hauntings concealed, "despite the deeply etched grooves that induce us to slide into the production of feminist comfort stories…these grooves are lined with always shifting and numerous snags, tears and portals, inviting alternative paths" (*ibid*.: 629). Thus, while a generalised story may be reverted to, it will be a story that is always haunted. A story that ghosts will materialise within, and if taken notice of and followed on detours, will empty out the story's fullness, open out its closure.

Like Patti Lather's refutation of a 'comfort text', such success-through-failure will offer no "comforting reassurances", instead suggesting possibilities in "open-ended conclusions and future[s]" (*ibid.*: 629). To fail at fully dismantling what it is to 'be' a liberal warrior, or to fail at reaching a singular, uncomplicated understanding of the subjectivity, is failure only if measured according to what Gordon calls the social sciences renewed "commitment to blindness" and its "shrunken, formal, and value-laden official empirical actualities" (2008: 207). Outside this commitment are ghostly matters and complicated ways of knowing, as well as the possibility of judging 'failure' as success through its revelation of the vulnerability and instability of terms such as 'militarised masculinity' and 'liberal warrior', and its offering up of alternative possibilities.

This chapter has sought to address the difficulty raised in my previous chapter regarding the inevitable and inadvertent performative (re)constitution of a militarised masculine subject through scholarship that seeks to deconstruct 'him'. Is there a way of engaging with 'the' subject that avoids the deeply etched grooves that would take my analysis and me back to a generalised story of a stable and 'knowable' subject/object of study? If drawing lines and mapping borders are an inevitable and crucial part of making sense of and being in the social world, then is there a means of keeping these lines 'soft', of ensuring 'militarised masculinity' and 'liberal warrior' remain empty signifiers taking on, discarding, renegotiating and shifting any number of (often contradictory) traits and characteristics? However, as I have already stated, given that these are the constraints in which we operate within, the alternative is to not: to not write, not critique and to not engage. The methodology I have offered then is not some kind of 'magic' method that offers an escape from this performative bind, rather, I have taken insights from Avery Gordon and others to confront this constitutive 'failure' of feminist research, the repeated "failure of the words we use to know or those we know to use" (Wiegman 2004: 161), and offer not just a language through which to talk about the (im)possibility of militarised masculinity, but a way to trace its undoing, and its haunting effects in multiple sites.

Gordon's epistemology of hauntings directs us to recognise what has been excluded or concealed in order to tell a story as the singularly real one. In her book she asks us to start paying attention to the individuals, things, ideas and memories – the 'ghostly matters' – that trouble us at every turn. I argue that it is by paying attention to 'ghosts' and giving notice to the hauntings they signify that paradoxes and contradictions within the stories we tell are rendered visible, and the lines and borders we map revealed as leaky or 'ghostly'. Talking and

writing about ghosts and hauntings reminds us of the messiness outside a generalised story, it takes us away from a comfort text, and makes fragile the subjects we (re)produce. As constitutive to social life, to search for hauntings and the concrete materialisation of ghosts, is to find them everywhere and always already there. Applying insights gained from Gordon's work on ghostly matters does not however, only serve as a reminder of the impossibility of a stable and complete liberal warrior subjectivity, it allows us to render visible and bridge the conceptual space between the everyday and the spectacular, the banal and the violent. It is then a 'ghost hunt' – or perhaps more specifically, giving notice to the hauntings such hunted ghosts signify – of a liberal warrior and its sites of (re)production that the rest of this thesis is concerned with. A hunt that will reveal disrupting hauntings and some of the numerous ways they are rendered visible, including the appearance of (sometimes violent) ghosts.

CHAPTER THREE

BASIC TRAINING AND THE MYTHS OF ASEXUALITY AND DISCIPLINE

In line with other 'Western' militaries, the twenty-first century has seen the British military evolve from an institution primarily concerned with war fighting, to an institution now intimately connected with nation building. No longer do the British engage in combat for territory, wealth or power – those imperial impulses have long since been quelled – now the British military enter wars to save vulnerable women[53], topple despotic regimes[54], and facilitate the establishment of a stable and secure (read, liberal democratic) government and society. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), of which Britain is a member (and second largest troop contributor after the USA), is a UN-mandated international military force created to assist the government of Afghanistan in creating a "secure environment for sustainable stability that is observable to the population" (ISAF n.d.). Securing a stable environment will not just involve conducting operations "to reduce the capability and the will of the [Taliban] insurgency", but will also entail the training and support of the Afghan National Security Forces; reconstruction and development efforts through ISAF's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs); and the provision of support for humanitarian assistance efforts (*ibid.*). The British Army website, describing its operations in Afghanistan and involvement in ISAF, also emphasises their non-violent, 'humanitarian', practices. For example, the British Army's "civilian stabilisation experts…[who] follow up security with plans for new roads, clean water and basic justice" (MoD n.d.b), or the army's role in PRTs, helping to improve the lives of local Afghans through the rebuilding of schools, repairing and/or building of infrastructure, and the distribution of medication, food and winter supplies (MoD n.d.c). While much of the British Army's webpage is dominated by traditional soldiering pictures of predominantly white, male soldiers dressed in full

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[53] This was seen most overtly in the run-up to 2001 invasion into Afghanistan, where Afghan women were framed as vulnerable and in need to 'saving' from the uncivilised and barbaric Taliban. Numerous feminists have pointed to the ways in which Afghan women were utilised in this way including: L. Abu-Lughod (2002); K. J. Ayotte and M.E. Husain (2005); A. Russo (2006); K. Hunt (2002); C.A. Stabile and K. Kumar (2005); L.J. Shepherd (2006); and I.M. Young (2003).

[54] As seen in the 2003 invasion into Iraq, and, more recently, in the 2011 NATO bombing campaign of Libya against the Gaddafi regime.

combat gear and carrying weaponry, the majority of the written information on their operations and deployments provided alongside them relates not to combat and warfare as traditionally understood, but to the British Army's involvement in training programmes, humanitarian relief operations, and reconstruction and development – in short, to nation building.

Alongside this shift from war fighting to nation building, and the expectation that soldiers will now take responsibility for more 'humanitarian' tasks simultaneous to their fighting role, there has been a shift in what a discursively idealised militarised masculine subject 'looks' like. This chapter will introduce my understanding of a 'liberal warrior' in more detail. It will claim that while soldiers are still expected to be capable of deploying lethal violence, with the turn towards counterinsurgency warfare they are now equally expected to demonstrate restraint, know when to hold back, and engage with the local community. In this context, a discursively idealised soldier is both a war fighter and humanitarian – a 'liberal warrior' (Howell 2011). I argue that this 'new'[55] soldiering identity parallels with the Cartesian subject, with the separation of mind from body, rationality from irrationality. Having identified this ideal-type soldier the chapter then goes on to explore the ways in which 'he'[56] is produced. Long identified by both those writing on militarised masculinities and current and former soldiers as a privileged site of construction, numerous authors have sought to unpack the ways in which the formal and informal practices of basic training have operated to produce members of the armed forces. Rather than reproducing that body of research this chapter will pay attention to the particular gendered discourses that frame basic training and military life more generally, and using a 'postsructuralised' reading of Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* focus on two particular myths that emerge from, and reinforce, these gendered discourses: the myth of asexuality and the myth of discipline.

Created through particular binaries – masculine/feminine; mind/body; straight/queer; disciplined/uncontrolled – the seeming stability and security of a liberal

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[55] The term 'new' has been placed in inverted commas as this is not the first time a shift towards counterinsurgency tactics and nation building has been witnessed. For example, many hold up Britain's counterinsurgency doctrine during the 'Malaya Emergency' in the 1950s as a success story for these tactics (see John Nagl [2002]). While the shifts that have taken place within the British military context with regard to colonialism and counterinsurgency will be traced in this thesis, what I would argue is indeed distinct about this current period is the technological advancement and expertise that allows air strikes, pilotless bombs and surveillance drones, while at the same time re-centring the importance of the human soldiering body through 'population-centric' counterinsurgency warfare and the battle for 'hearts and minds'.

[56] The soldiering subjectivity under construction in this chapter will be a 'he' as, explained in more detail later, I will be exploring the training practices of the British infantry; a branch of the armed forces that remains closed to women.

warrior is reliant upon the marking as 'hard' the border that separates the two opposing terms. The myths of asexuality and discipline work to not only mark the two terms as symmetrically opposing, but also operates to map the borders of a liberal warrior. Through the myth of asexuality bodily (homo)sexual potential is expelled despite the highly homosocial and, at times, homoerotic and hypersexualised environment of basic training. Likewise, uncontrolled, irrational impulses are exorcised by the myth of discipline leaving a perfectly controlled, perfectly rational soldier. These expulsions are what *haunt* a liberal warrior; they are what have been deemed 'outside' borders mapping the subjectivity. By ridding the human body of this 'messiness', a disordered and unpredictable body is replaced by a disciplined, controlled (militarised masculine) subject. Borders marked by the myths of asexuality and discipline however, are not hard and fixed, but soft and porous. In effect, the myths, like the generalised story of a liberal warrior they work to produce, are incomplete, unstable and precarious. This chapter seeks to draw attention to both the mythical status of the myths and to the (im)possibility of a stable and fixed liberal warrior.

FROM MILITARISED MASCULINITY TO LIBERAL WARRIOR

Unlike recent previous conflicts the British military have been involved with (the Gulf War in 1991/2 and Kosovo in 1999), both the on-going war in Afghanistan and 2003-2011 war in Iraq quickly turned into counterinsurgency operations. The demands and needs of counterinsurgency warfare differ greatly from other forms of conflict, with soldiers expected to circulate in the population and be capable of both identifying enemy insurgents and winning the 'hearts and minds' of locals. Writing about the Western counterinsurgency doctrine, British Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster states it "generally identifies the 'hearts and minds campaign' – gaining and maintaining the support of the domestic population in order to isolate the insurgent – as the key to success" (Aylwin-Foster 2005: 4). Aylwin-Foster identifies two skills a counterinsurgency military force must have that are not required in "conventional warfighting": "first, it must be able to see issues and actions from the perspective of the domestic population; second, it must understand the relative value of force and how easily excessive force, even when apparently justified, can undermine popular support" (*ibid*.: 4). Crucially, military operations – read, kinetic 'war fighting' operations – must "be subordinate to the political campaign" (*ibid*.: 4). With this need for 'boots on the ground', reliance on the high altitude bombing campaigns of previous conflicts is no longer

deemed as an appropriate strategy[57]. Instead, as some of the detail above points to, the British military is expected to provide something of a dual, and paradoxical, role; that of both war fighter and nation builder. As the 2,020,000 SA80 assault rifle rounds; 1,830,000 general purpose machine gun rounds; and 25,000 artillery shells fired by British troops in Afghanistan in the year August 2006 to September 2007 (Harding 2008) attest to, this is not a peacekeeping mission. This is not a mission where British soldiers will leave "without a single shot being fired" as the former Secretary of State for Defence, John Reid, hoped in 2006 when he committed another 3,300 troops to Helmand Province (*ibid.*). However, nor would these wars be won simply by recourse to the technological and weaponry superiority of the Western powers. Success depends on the support of the wider population. Support that is believed to be gained through the securing, reconstruction and development of Afghanistan and Iraq. As Patrick Hennessey comments is his memoir, war "still required at one end of its spectrum…the guts and determination and aggression to stick a bayonet in another man", but at the other end, it "was crying out for…intelligence and moderation and subtlety of approach" (2009: 68). Thus, when British troops aren't getting through some four million bullets in a year, they are engaging in shuras[58] with local officials and tribal elders; taking part in "embedded partnering" with the Afghan National Army (ANA) (MoD n.d.d); and, as members of PRTs, are involved with the rebuilding of schools, and the construction of "irrigation ditches, pipelines, reservoirs and wells...to bring water to the local population" (MoD, n.d.c). As the last page of ISAF's counterinsurgency news magazine, *COIN Common Sense* (Vol. 1, Issue 7, May 2012), depicts (see below), counterinsurgency does not 'look' like ordinary warfare. Those involved may be combat-trained soldiers, but they are combat-trained soldiers who engage with the communities they work within. They provide medical assistance, they are open and tactile (especially the female soldiers) with local children, and, according to this particular photo montage, are implicitly responsible for providing play areas and swings for children. It is this focus on the population and the "transformation of *civilian* allegiances and remaking their social world" (Khalili 2011: 1473, emphasis in original) that has led some commentators to suggest that counterinsurgency presents us with a more 'feminine' form of warfare[59]. This feminised coding is reinforced by

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[57] This is not however, to suggest that such bombing campaigns do not take place at all. Indeed critics of counterinsurgency warfare have pointed to the ways in which all the attention paid to 'boots on the ground' and 'hearts and minds' actually serves to deflect attention from the continued reliance of British and American troops on kinetic force and air power.

[58] 'Shura' is the Arabic word for 'consultation'. In Afghanistan it is fairly common for senior members of the British military to meet with male elders from local villages in a shura to reassure the local population of the security provided by the ISAF presence.

[59] Although written prior to the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts and Western militaries concomitant turn towards counterinsurgency, van Creveld's polemical 2000 article, "The Great Illusion", tracks women's increasing participation in Western militaries and what he views as militaries attendant turn away from

counterinsurgency's presentation as "the opposite of a more mechanised, technologically advanced, higher-fire-power form of warfare"; a warfare often depicted as "hyper-masculine" (*ibid.*: 1473).

The back page of ISAF's counterinsurgency news magazine, *COIN Common Sense* (Vol. 1, Issue 7, May 2012)

In line with this 'new' kind of warfare comes the concomitant shift of a discursively idealised militarised masculine subject. While the Rambo-esque, hyper-masculinised, muscle-bound soldier has long been considered out of sync with the contemporary military[60], the "technologically sophisticated heroes of Tom Clancy's 'technothriller' novels" (Niva 1998: 119) associated with the 'technowar' of the first Gulf War, also fail to capture the complexity and particular 'type' of soldier required for counterinsurgency. While the photographs of

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war fighting and towards peacebuilding. A shift van Creveld understands as a 'feminisation' (and decline) of the militaries of the "advanced" (2000: 429) world. Steven McLaughlin who passed through British Army basic training in the early 2000s also comments that the "culture of violence" (2006: 44) that marked the British Army had changed, with lectures, in his opinion, now predominantly focused on "politically correct garbage" (*ibid.*: 44). McLaughlin, like van Creveld, implicitly feminises the contemporary military by wondering, after hearing talks on "workplace equality" and "spotting abusive behaviour", if he "was in the army or social services" (*ibid.*: 44).

[60] In fact, with regard to the British military specifically, it is questionable whether this figure ever represented even a discursively idealised conception of a soldier. It is perhaps more likely that this muscle-bound, overly aggressive character was used more as a point of (unfavourable) comparison between British and American fighting forces (a point explored in more detail later), rather than an aspirational figure.

counterinsurgency soldiers above echo official photographs of UN peacekeepers[61], this new emerging militarised masculinity differs also from this. While peacekeepers are deployed to keep the peace, a counterinsurgency soldier takes the fight to the enemy, crushing the insurgents' capacity to fight back. The "nation-building warrior" (Howell 2011) of counterinsurgency warfare then, spans all the above soldiering 'types' while not remaining tied to the standards or expectations of any. Counterinsurgency has provided the context for the emergence of a new form of militarised masculinity: one that is authorised by neo-liberal feminism, "in which 'manliness' is softened" and the masculinity of what Khalili calls "humanitarian soldier-scholar[s] (white, literate, articulate, and doctorate festooned) overshadows the hyper-masculinity of warrior kings" (Khalili 2011: 1475). Unlike the raw physical masculinity of a warrior, these 'soldier-scholars' "are not interested in chest-thumping gestures, [they] deploy the language of 'hearts and minds' much more readily and see their wont as being the wielders of softer or smarter power" (*ibid*.: 1487).

With a history of frequent military campaigns, overseas training and imperial experience, the British are portrayed by many as being particularly suited to counterinsurgency soldiering. "Etched into much Atlantic discourse is the notion that Britain as enlightened Greece can refine the military might of America's uncouth and untutored Rome, the old hegemon educating the new about handling the natives" (Porter 2009: 13). From the British Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster's article in *Military Review* detailing the US military's counterinsurgency failures in Iraq[62] to the American Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl's (2002) claims that the British military's organisational culture allowed it to succeed in Malaya (1948-60) while America failed in Vietnam, that the British military is somehow better 'equipped' for counterinsurgency operations is a popular refrain. The US Major General Robert Scales, in his testimony on Iraq before Congress in 2004, "urged the US military to follow the footsteps of British soldier-adventurers such as…T.E. Lawrence" (Porter 2009: 58). Such sentiments echoed those made by the British press[63] as well as some British combatants self-congratulatory tone when UK forces entered southern Iraq in 2003. While not universal, the dominant popular discourse was that of the British "pacifying the region with a lighter footprint, presenting their urban peacekeeping as 'the tactical antithesis

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[61] Photographs typically depicting (white, male) peacekeepers assisting women from the local population or interacting with children.
[62] While Aylwin-Foster praises the American Army for its "unparalleled sense of patriotism, duty, passion, commitment, and determination", he also points to "their cultural insensitivity, almost certainly inadvertent, [which] arguably amounted to institutional racism" (2005: 3). Rather than placating the local population, Aylwin-Foster claims American troops acted like "fuel on a smouldering fire...as much owing to their presence as their actions" (*ibid*.: 4).
[63] For example, news stories such as the one about British troops not wearing sunglasses that I mentioned in my introduction.

to the brutal and aggressive Yanks'" (*ibid.*: 58)[64]. Given America's overwhelming military strength, Britain's empire gone, and its armed forces shrunk, Anglophiles like to claim that Britain's strategic role is their "cultural skill…as junior but more seasoned" partner to the 'big brother' of America (*ibid.*: 13).

In short, while it is now recognised that it is no longer enough to be the deadliest fighter or have the most technologically advanced weaponry, nor does a counterinsurgency soldier occupy an exclusively peacekeeping role. As the voiceover on a MoD video on the British Army's ten year involvement in Afghanistan states, British soldiers are "taking the fight to the Taliban" (MoD n.d.e). It is this dual role that is integral to understandings of this 'new' discursively idealised soldier, and it is this dual role that proves so difficult to construct. As Alison Howell states, "[r]estraint and the capacity to control emotion, is key to the success of counterinsurgency warfare". It is no longer just enough to train soldiers to kill: now the ability to judge and, at times, exercise restraint is crucial (Howell 2011: 6).

It is my belief that this emerging soldiering figure, specific to the humanitarian and counterinsurgency wars of Iraq and Afghanistan, parallels with the Cartesian subject that is so central to the liberal or modernist project. As Vivienne Jabri (2007) has pointed to, the 'wars on terror' are liberal projects carried out by liberal states, and such projects thus require liberal (warrior) subjects to do their bidding. The Cartesian, or liberal, subject, immortalised in Descartes' separation of mind and body, is the "autonomous, disembodied, sovereign reasoning subject" (Pin-Fat 2013: 4). It is a subjectivity that is produced through, and relies on, dichotomies other than the mind/body separation: for example, dualisms such as certainty/doubt, rational/irrational, masculine/feminine (Edkins 1999: 33). And it is a subjectivity that I believe we are witnessing being (re)produced and (re)articulated in and through the discourses of counterinsurgency warfare. The form of war-fighting currently advanced by military strategists in the British and American militaries "deploys an openly liberal discourse of salvation and humanitarianism", and the soldier who performs such war-fighting duties is not only "the ultimate in civic virtue, he is also the embodiment of international wisdom, war-fighting prowess, and a kind of knowingness about the world" (Khalili 2011: 1487). In comparing the "[r]aw physical masculinity" of a conventional warrior and a contemporary counterinsurgency soldier, Khalili finds that the "former is emotional,

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[64] The 'success' of this 'lighter footprint' however, came under scrutiny when in December 2007, UK forces had to withdraw to the outskirts of Basra in Southern Iraq almost under siege by mortars and rockets. In March 2008 it took an American-Iraqi offensive, rather than soft peacekeeping, to restore order to the city (Porter 2009: 59).

embodied, perhaps even irrational; the latter is intellectual, cool, steady-handed" (*ibid.*: 1487). While in her article Khalili identifies 'soldier-scholars' as "highly educated military (or ex-military) men, all of whom are ranked above captain, all of whom are engaged in policymaking *vis-à-vis* the War on Terror, and all of whom are enthusiastic counterinsurgents" (*ibid.*: 1487), I am not explicitly writing about such high ranking military personnel here. However, rhetoric surrounding counterinsurgency and the ways in which military personnel of all ranks and branches come to know 'who they are'[65] draws on Cartesian understandings of subjectivity. From Khalili's 'soldier-scholars' to the 'grunts' or 'squaddies' on the front line who see their own civility in relation to (and superior of) the Others who populate their zones of operations[66], rationality and sovereignty are key in their 'knowingness' of themselves. Like the Cartesian subject, a militarised masculine subject produced in and through counterinsurgency is presented as something of a disembodied subject[67]; a subject that through the faculty of reason is capable of "freeing itself from the constraints of specific dispositions such as passions, emotions, basic needs and more importantly, traces of 'animalistic urges' such as killing" (Pin-Fat 2013: 5)[68]. Unlike the hyper-masculine warrior of old who rampages and kills, or who shoots and asks questions later, this emerging conception of militarised masculinity is divested of these violent and 'animalistic' bodily urges. Instead, a counterinsurgency liberal warrior is rational, highly disciplined and capable of controlling their emotions.

It should be noted at this point that while I believe this shift towards counterinsurgency and Britain's past as a colonial power mean that the whole of the British armed forces has been marked by, and to a certain extent embodies, a liberal warrior subjectivity, for the rest of this thesis my focus will be directed towards the British Army specifically, and infantry soldiers in particular. While I am aware this focus will (re)iterate and (re)inscribe a combat soldier's position as *the* militarised masculinity, I do so because of my desire to trace militarised violences in war. Not only did those stories of soldier-perpetrated violence that first caught my attention (detailed in my introduction) tend to be

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[65] And indeed, how we, the public, come to know 'who they are' – this will be further unpacked in my fifth chapter.

[66] For example, in his reflections on his time spent fighting in Iraq, the former British infantry soldier, Steven McLaughlin, writes about witnessing "poverty on a scale that wouldn't be accepted in the Western world" (2006: 194) as well as the "underlying decay and suffering" (*ibid.*: 195) of Iraqi society.

[67] It should be noted that within the analytical philosophical tradition the disembodied Cartesian subject is aligned with a conception of a universal and neutral, but implicitly male, subject: "If man is all mind, then woman is all body" (Hooper 2001: 19). Feminists have long disputed this supposedly "disembodied, sexless, and gender-blind character", instead pointing to the white, Western, heterosexual and male nature implicit in the subject (Edkins 1999: 30).

[68] There is something of a dual and paradoxical move in this disembodiment: while a liberal warrior subjectivity has been divested of embodied emotions and urges, the human body itself is more present and more visible on today's battlefields than in previous conflicts.

carried out by 'frontline' soldiers, but the infantry's primary role of closing in and engaging in combat with the enemy mean that it tends to be their stories of violence – both that which they perpetrate and that which they are subjected to – that dominate stories of war.

BASIC TRAINING AS A SITE OF CONSTRUCTION

As my first chapter demonstrated, soldiers – whichever form or 'type' they may embody – are made, not born. They are produced through particular discourses and performative practices, and through formal and informal military processes. However, military training, and basic training in particular, has been identified as a privileged site of construction, both by those writing on militarised masculinities and by soldiers themselves. Occurring only once, at the beginning, basic training is the most overt indication that active constitution is indeed necessary and further disrupts assumed associations between masculinity and violence. Why, after all, is quite so much effort required to train naturally aggressive *men* into soldiering subjects? As Cynthia Enloe writes, "[i]f masculinity 'in the raw' were sufficient, there would be little need for the sweat, blisters, and humiliations of basic training" (1993: 55).

No matter what branch or service of the armed forces a recruit joins, all must complete some form of basic training, with those joining the British Army having to complete the fourteen week-long Common Military Syllabus (CMS). And it is during this period that, according to the majority of those writing and reflecting on the role of basic training, something transformative occurs[69]. That those who go through the training experience something of an "identity reformation" and the forging of a "new self-identity" (Karner 1998: 215), one that is often described as a shift from civilian to soldier, or in more overtly gendered terminology, from boy to man. There is then a continuing belief that something occurs during those weeks of training that profoundly changes a recruit and 'makes' him (or her) a soldier.

The uniformity (inasmuch as all recruits must complete a specific set of formal practices in order to 'pass out'), timing (basic training marks the formal start-point of a recruit's military life/career), and the apparently transformative effects of basic training, all work to mark it as a key site in which a liberal warrior militarised masculinity is constructed. It will be through these training practices that a recruit is not only trained to fight, kill and

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[69] For example see Arkin and Dobrofsky (1978); Barbara Ehrenreich (1997); Eisenheart (1975); Hennessey (2008); Hockey (1986; 2002; 2003); Karner (1998); McLaughlin (2006); and Woodward and Winter (2007).

operate an array of technological weaponry, but will also be taught the operational rules of engagement, when to exercise restraint, and when to hold back. This is not however, to suggest that conceptualisations of militarised masculinity produced through and within basic training are the sole 'maps' of a discursively idealised counterinsurgency soldier, but that basic training is significant in its role as the popularly conceived start-point of a soldier's 'becoming'.

To state therefore that it is through practices of basic training that soldiers are 'made' is not to stake a new claim. Numerous authors have detailed the ways in which recruits entering the military are stripped down and remoulded as soldiers, and it is not my intention to reproduce that body of research in any great detail here. Instead I want to focus on the specific ways in which basic training seeks to produce the soldiering subjects that counterinsurgency requires. The ways in which the bodily excesses and messiness of recruits are expelled, the hauntings of passions, emotions and embodied urges exorcised, and in the space left by the elimination of this messy, undisciplined, embodied human, the marking of a border, the disciplining of a subject, and the production of a perfectly controlled, perfectly rational, perfect violent, liberal warrior. Before however, I turn my attention explicitly to the production of this subject, some detail on what exactly is expected of recruits joining the contemporary British Army.

Combat Infantryman's Course – Parachute Regiment

As has already been noted, all army recruits must complete the CMS which is known as 'Phase One training' before passing out and going on to their Phase Two placements respective to the specific arm they intend to join. This is with exception of the infantry who complete Phase One and Two training together during the Combat Infantryman's Course (CIC). As well as covering the entirety of the CMS, the CIC includes additional training in skill at arms (including support weapons), tactics, physical fitness and drill. Depending on the branch of the infantry a recruit enters – the line infantry, foot guards, or Parachute Regiment – the CIC will be structured slightly differently, with both the foot guards and Parachute Regiment doing an extra two weeks training, focused either on drill to reflect their ceremonial duties or spent completing the Basic Parachute Course respectively. However, all the CICs are broadly similar, with the CMS also reflecting a less intensive version of the CIC. After all, no matter what arm a recruit may end up serving in they are expected to have

the physical fitness, tactical knowledge and capability with weaponry should they need it in an operational environment[70].

Using an overview of the Parachute Regiment's CIC, a picture of what takes place during basic training can begin to be built up. Reading from the British Army webpage, the 'CIC – PARA' states that it is designed to build up "recruits' skills and fitness bit by bit". The website warns that a lot "is demanded of soldiers under training…both mentally and physically", with recruits "usually finding that Army life is different from anything they have experienced, and they need to adjust quickly to the Army's discipline and rules". The CIC aims to teach recruits "the importance of discipline, integrity, loyalty and respect for others… [and] learn that being a soldier is about putting others first and having the courage to do the right thing in any given situation" (MoD n.d.f).

The course comprises of six main areas: personal administration; weapons training; drill; fieldcraft; fitness; and teamwork. Personal administration includes "everything to do with looking after self and kit, in the field as well as in camp". During weapons training recruits will learn to handle a number of weapons including the SA80 rifle, the light machine-gun and the general purpose machine-gun, as well as how to use night vision devices. Recruits will start on simulators before moving on to ranges and field firing exercises, with a five-day live firing exercise at the end of the course. Drill consists of "military procedures and movements, such as marching and parading", with the purpose of drill stated as fostering discipline in a recruit and teaching "him to take pride in his appearance and manner". The "Pass Out Parade" at the end of training is a public demonstration of these skills. Fieldcraft teaches recruits "the basic skills a soldier needs to work and survive in the field. Areas covered include camouflage and concealment, map reading, observation, first aid and defence measures". These "[s]kills are tested in exercises during the course, culminating in a final exercise during Week 23". Fitness is very important to the training process with lots of exercise "including sports, running, gym work, swimming, the assault course and general physical training". Finally, teamwork is fostered through "Adventurous Training", comprising of challenging outdoor activities such as abseiling, kayaking and rock climbing and aims to encourage soldiers to share the same values and improve their initiative (*ibid.*).

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[70] For example, Sergeant Chantelle Taylor was serving in the Royal Army Medical Corps in 2008 when her patrol came under fire from the Taliban. Faced with a fighter 50 ft. away, Taylor opened fire and became the first British female soldier to kill an enemy in combat. Reflecting on her role as a medic as opposed to combat soldier and experience of killing an enemy, Taylor said, "It would never be right to claim a kill as a medic, but at the end of the day he no longer had the ability to engage us and that's all that I am concerned about. Faced with the choice of him or me, I chose me" (cited in Adams 2011).

Split over thirty weeks, the Parachute Regiment's training is separated into four sections. Weeks 1-6 represent "individual training", with recruits moving in and being issued their military clothing and equipment. They will be taught personal administration both in-barracks and in the field, and will be introduced to physical training through a five mile run and circuit training, before progressing to the obstacle course and a five mile march. Rifle and drill lessons will be given, as well as lessons in operational law and bayonet fighting. Recruits will also take part in their first overnight exercise and complete field exercises on individual fire and movement, and reaction to enemy fire (MoD n.d.g). Weeks 7-12 can be summarised as "team and section skills". Recruits' knowledge of fieldcraft thus far will be tested and recruits will be introduced to a wider range of weapons including grenades, the light machine-gun and firing with live ammunition. The physical training will be progressed with 8-10 mile runs, further circuit training, the steeplechase, and a five and six mile march. This is combined with battle fitness testing consisting of loaded marches of 7-8 miles. Recruits will be introduced to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) testing, and will revise and be tested on their tactical field exercises (MoD n.d.h). "[P]latoon skills" make up weeks 13-18, with recruits taken adventurous training, introduced to the stretcher and log race, urban skills and be trained in the use of head-mounted night vision goggles. Physical training is again stepped up with a 9 and 12 mile loaded march, and further training given in map reading, CBRN, weapons and fieldcraft (MoD n.d.i). The final eleven weeks, 19-30, are the "confirm[ation] and challenge" of all that has been taught so far. Recruits will partake in a close quarter battle, a five day shooting exercise, a final exercise with patrol and platoon raids, a ten mile loaded march, a march and shoot competition, the final administration of kit, and the "Passing Out Parade" (MoD n.d.j). While the Passing Out Parade is described on the website as "one of the proudest moments in a soldier's life" (indicating at this point, that the recruit is indeed a soldier as opposed to a 'civvie'), recruits are warned that "the challenge will be only just beginning". From there soldiers "must go on to understand what being an infantryman really means, and how they fit into the bigger picture of military life and operations" (MoD n.d.f).

DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES AND GENDERED DISCOURSES

Writing in 1975, Michel Foucault made the claim that, "By the late eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made; out of a formless clay; an inapt body; the machine required can be constructed" (1995 [1977]: 135). The body had been identified as an object and target of power; a surface to be "manipulated, shaped, [and]

trained" (*ibid.*:136). Power, Foucault claimed, was no longer simply coercive, but was productive and constitutive. "As disciplinary, power no longer operated as a simple external force on the body, rather, it was taken up by the body to produce a particular subject" (Masters 2008: 92). In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault details the ways in which the "military has been exemplar in this constitutive process where, through its disciplinary techniques, it came to produce the subject desired – the soldier" (*ibid.*: 92)[71]. It is then, through these 'disciplinary techniques', and the ways in which they act upon the body, that Foucault claims a soldiering subjectivity is produced. Importantly, it is through these disciplinary techniques and their actions upon the body, that a soldiering identity capable of mastering their body, of having control over its functions, desires and emotions, is constituted.

Foucault distinguishes disciplinary techniques and methods from other investments of power by the scale of their control, the object of their control and their modality. While it was not the first time that the body had become the object of such pressing investments, which imposed constraints, prohibitions and obligations, these disciplinary methods ensured an "infinitesimal power over the active body" (*ibid.*: 136-7). Such control was achieved by obtaining holds upon the body at the "level of the mechanism itself – movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity" (the 'scale of the control'), and controlling "the economy, the efficiency of movements" of the body (the 'object of control'). Lastly, bodies within such a regime of disciplinary power are under constant, uninterrupted coercion; the processes of activity, rather than its result, continually supervised (the 'modality'). These methods make possible the meticulous control of a body, assuring the constant subjection of its forces (*ibid.*: 137).

Basic training can be viewed as an archetypal site of disciplinary power. Upon entering it, recruits' bodies enter into a "machinery of power", one that "explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it" (*ibid.*: 138). It is not however, only the military institution that gains 'meticulous control of the body'. While the military may control the shape and actions of a body (although to what degree they are completely successful in these goals I will explore later), the recruit too is told that they now have more ability and more control over their physical selves than ever before. (The self-given mottos of the regular and territorial British Army – 'Be the Best' and 'Do More. Be More' respectively – encapsulate this notion of pushing and enhancing bodily limits.) Having successfully completed training, especially

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[71] Although Foucault identifies the military as exemplary in this constitutive process, he does not suggest that it is only the military, only soldiers, which are produced through such techniques; hospitals, jails and schools (to name a few), are all noted as institutions that also employ disciplinary techniques. Furthermore, the disciplinary techniques of each do not work in isolation from the disciplines of others. Instead they overlap, intersect and interact with one another, ensuring constant and on-going productions of subjected and 'docile' bodies.

in the case of the CIC, a newly trained soldier will be able to run faster, stay awake longer, carry more weight and fight harder than they have ever previously been capable of. This notion of mastery over their bodies, of transcending what they had previously considered themselves capable of, echoes a central feature of the Cartesian subject: "that the faculty of reason provides humanity with the possibility of freeing itself from the constraints of specific dispositions… Reason, in this picture, is what allows us to be 'masters' of ourselves" (Pin-Fat 2013: 5).

The ways in which the practices – or *disciplines* – of basic training have worked to strip down and remould recruits from 'civilians' to 'soldiers' has been discussed extensively by authors working across numerous disciplines, and it is for this reason that I do not intend to spend too long unpacking it here. Instead, what I wish to bring to attention are the ways in which such practices may be understood as disciplinary, and how they can be understood as both gendered, and produced in and through gendered discourses. It is through exploring these gendered discourses, and the particular 'myths' of basic training that emerge from them, that my research will seek to show the constructing of a liberal warrior, and its simultaneous failure and (im)possibility.

In order to constitute a militarised masculine identity, a recruit's civilian identity must first be contained. Authors writing on militarised masculinities detail the ways in which a recruit's individuality and civilian identity is dispossessed, and in its place a soldier-identity constituted, and a commitment to the norms and values of the military inculcated. As uniforms are issued, hair is shaved, and a recruit introduced to barrack living with its shared washing, sleeping and eating facilities, the degree of collective existence is made apparent. Such 'physical togetherness' – both in terms of recruits' physical appearances becoming similar, and the close living quarters – works to begin to foster a sense of teamwork and the *esprit de corps* (Arkin and Dobrofsky 1978: 163; Whitworth 2004: 157). With a system of collective rewards and punishments, and relationships forged under arduous conditions (for example, in make-shift shelters in the cold and wet while out on exercise), recruits begin to identify themselves as part of a distinct family or collectivity – a "warrior brotherhood" (Whitworth 2004: 158) [72]. As Hennessey recalls, somewhat sardonically, "Friendships were forged like lightening in that adversity… With nothing but the guy next to you to share your misery, we became intimately close to guys we'd never met" (2009: 47).

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[72] There is a significant body of work in the making of a militarised masculine subject. Alongside those that have and will appear in-text in this sub-section and in footnote 22 also see: Beevor (1991) (chapter 2 in particular); Goldstein (2001) (chapters 4 and 5 in particular); Paul Higate (2003).

In all accounts of basic training, the *scale of control* is apparent. Meticulous and minute techniques and details are expected in areas of life a recruit is likely to have never before given a second thought to. In his ethnographic study of infantry recruits, John Hockey identifies four areas of control. Firstly, control over a recruit's self-determination and their freedom to make choices. A recruit's particular type of dress will be specified for each period of instruction, as is how he stores his uniforms and equipment, how he makes his bed, and how he "washes, shaves, and cleans one's boots" (Hockey 1986: 26)[73]. Secondly, control over recruits' autonomy of movement is ensured through rigid timetabling that determines where a recruit goes, when, and the time and pace of his movements (*ibid*.: 24), with punishments for the minor misdemeanour of running late. Hennessey writes that during his own training he and his platoon were expected to begin each day

> seated in coveralls in the main corridor…awaiting the arrival of Colour Sergeant White… On the first morning we made the mistake of being there at 0525, which is to say we were five minutes late because 0525 means we should have been there at 0520. Press-ups first thing in the morning prove an effective way of teaching this lesson in timekeeping (2009: 41).

Third, basic training sees an end to a recruit's privacy with existence completely collective with shared toilet and shower facilities and meals taken communally. "In addition both the recruit's physical self and his belongings are open to daily inspections by superiors" (Hockey 1986: 25). Finally, a recruit's personal appearance is no longer their 'personal' appearance with dress, length of hair and shininess of boots all controlled and open to surveillance (*ibid*.: 24). The standards to which a recruit's appearance is held led Hennessey to remove his shirt before brushing his teeth to avoid tiny flecks of white toothpaste and to change boots having come back from breakfast in case those worn there had got scuffed and had to be freshly polished (Hennessey 2009: 41). These techniques of control place recruits' bodies in a relation of power in which they are simultaneously regarded as both objects and as instruments (Foucault 1995: 170), with practices of basic training seeking both to increase the 'aptitude' of the body, while reversing power that might result from it, ensuring "a relation of strict subjection" (*ibid*.: 138).

It is as the *object of control* of basic training's disciplinary techniques, that bodily restraints are transcended. The movements, efficiency and organisation of a recruit's body are continually policed and the mastery of each increased. Constraints are not only placed upon a recruit's movements from location to location through timetabling, a recruit's whole posture, demeanour and motion will become the subject of control and critical surveillance

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[73] Further details on personal appearance and domesticity are given in the sub-section on the 'myth of discipline'.

by superiors (Hockey 1986: 25-6). This reaches its apex on the drill square with each movement

> divided up into parts, and each part given a number. Recruits then practice each part separately and, when proficient, combine the parts to effect the full movement. They are made to shout out these numbers together at the required pace as they execute the movements (*ibid.*: 29).

A recruit will find "that even facial movements are now subject to control", with Hockey recalling recruits being reprimanded for smiling during drill practice (*ibid.*: 26). This breaking down of bodily movements is found not only on the drill square but also on the firing range, during 'personal administration' (how to wash/shave/look after your kit) and during domestic chores. They ensure bodies not only do what one wishes, but operates as one wishes: "with the techniques, the speed and efficiency that one determines" (Foucault 1995: 138).

The success of basic training and disciplinary power more generally, derives from the use of hierarchical observation and normalising judgement (*ibid.*: 170) – the constant coercion and *modality* of this power. The hyper-regulation of new recruits, layout of the barracks and its enclosure from the outside world, mean that recruits are under (near) constant supervision. Such high levels of surveillance mean that penalties are imposed for non-observance, for "that which does not measure up to the rule, that departs from it" (*ibid.*: 178). In both formal and informal practices of basic training penalties (whether in the formal form of exercise as punishment or the removal of 'privileges' such as mobile phone use, or in the informal form of bullying) are imposed for the "whole indefinite domain of the non-conforming…the soldier commits an 'offence' whenever he does not reach the level [or expectation] required" (*ibid.*: 178-9). In these ways, the processes of basic training, the disciplinary techniques, are simultaneously "absolutely indiscreet" (inasmuch as they are everywhere and always alert), and "absolutely discreet" (they function permanently and largely in silence) (*ibid.*: 177). In effect, the production of the desired subject is always underway. From the formal training practices, rigid timetables and strict rules regarding behaviour, to the informal, 'everyday' engagements with fellow recruits and trainers, a militarised masculine subjectivity is being constituted.

Despite Foucault's ideas of disciplinary power and the production of subjects having been taken up by numerous feminists, Foucault himself was not a feminist and his analysis of disciplinary techniques neglects to demonstrate the ways in which configurations of disciplinary power are both specifically gendered (Diamond and Quinby 1988: xiv), and produced in and through particular gendered discourses. Masculinist discourses of male

superiority, dominance and control, and its corollary of feminine denigration, circulate, intersect, and interact with discourses of the *esprit de corps* and male bonding (despite large sections of the military now open to women, basic training continues to take place in single-sex battalions), with an aggressive heterosexuality marking the informal culture of basic training and the barracks more widely. For example, for a recruit to successfully complete the physically challenging and mentally tough formal practices of basic training, they have to demonstrate physical and mental endurance, aggression and determination – characteristics that will all be marked as explicitly masculine (Eisenhart 1975: 16; Whitworth 2004: 160-1). Meanwhile, informal practices and the wider culture of basic training meanwhile revolve around heterosexuality, with explicit and implicit links made between a recruit's competency as a soldier and his sexuality. For example, recruits who fail to meet the physical expectations of basic training are met with sexualised insults such as "faggot" or "sissies" (Whitworth 2004: 156)[74], while a 'macho ethos' within the barrack room pervades despite the 2000 lifting of the ban on openly gay soldiers serving in the British military. During my fieldwork on Catterick infantry barracks it seemed the majority of walls in both soldiers' private spaces (their rooms) and shared/common spaces were adorned with pictures of naked or semi-naked women. Victoria Basham (2012) recalled similar scenes of aggressive heterosexuality during her own fieldwork in the overt sexualisation and objectification of women, as well as open discussions of (hetero)sexual encounters. Like the supposedly neutral and universal Cartesian subject, these masculinist discourses work to produce a soldier identity that is masculine, heterosexual (and white[75]). It is worth remembering however, that the military does in fact already function within a gendered regime – and not only the one they construct – and participates in gendered discourses already going on. Understandings of gender pass both in and out of the military[76], and the bodies of recruits entering basic training are not 'blank canvases' for the military to work upon, but always already marked by discourses of gender[77].

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[74] Such homophobic abuse (or 'banter' as it is commonly referred to) is also present in wider British and Western culture more generally.

[75] Like the aggressive heterosexuality that marks the institution despite the inclusion of homosexual bodies, a liberal warrior subjectivity is produced as white despite the inclusion of brown and black bodies. The specific ways that this 'whiteness' is constructed within the British military context is explored in my next chapter.

[76] See Woodward and Winter (2007) for a wider discussion on the ways in which ideas of gender are (re)produced as they circulate round, and in and out of, army and civilian cultures.

[77] For example, ideas that 'real men' are strong, in control and sexually virile, circulate not just within the armed forces but operate in numerous sites throughout society.

'POSTSTRUCTURALISED' BARTHES

Emerging from, and reinforcing, these gendered discourses, are particular *myths*. Myths that are integral to the constitution of this new conception of a soldiering ideal[78]. My use of the term 'myth' draws on Roland Barthes (2009 [1957]) use of the term, or a 'poststructuralised' Barthes as appropriated by scholars such as Storey (1993), Saper (1997), Weber (2009) and Áhäll (2012). In his seminal work *Mythologies*, Barthes sets about on his overtly political task of interrogating the "falsely obvious", of separating nature from history, and locating the ideological abuse (for Barthes this was the bourgeois norm) that resides within "*what-goes-without-saying*" (Barthes 2009: xix, emphasis in original). Drawing on Saussure's linguistic system in which a *signifier* and *signified* draw together to produce a *sign*, Barthes sets out a second, staggered semiological system in which the final term of Saussure's linguistic system (the sign) is the first term of Barthes' own mythical system. In this second system, the signifier (*form*) itself is created by the sum of (first system) signs, and the signified (*concept*) is that which is evoked by that particular word/object/action. Barthes calls the third term of the myth 'signification' and it is this which is "the myth itself" (*ibid.*: 145): the association between the former two terms. For Barthes it is at this level of secondary signification that myth is both produced and consumed (Storey 1993: 78).

Barthes states that myth has a double function: "it points out and it notifies, it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us" (Barthes 2009: 140). What this means is that myths are not simply produced, but are activated from an already-available cultural repertoire – both drawing from the repertoire while at the same time adding to it (Storey 1993: 80). Myths then are inherently contextual, they depend on the "location of the text, the historical moment and the cultural formation of the reader"[79] (*ibid.*: 80). However, what motivates Barthes in his work is the apparent obscuring of this context, of the myth's history. Barthes refers to myths as "depoliticized speech" (Barthes 2009: 168) because of their constitution through the loss of the historical quality of things. Within myth, "things lose the memory that they were once made" (*ibid.*: 169). For Barthes, myth performs a "conjuring trick" in which reality is turned inside out, "it has emptied it of history and filled it with nature" (*ibid.*: 169). It is not then that myth denies things, "on the contrary, its

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[78] It should be noted that these myths did not only emerge alongside the turn towards counterinsurgency warfare and nation building. Rather, while these myths have long been integral to the creation of militarised masculine identities, in the contemporary context they have come to signify a very specific subject.

[79] Here we can understand the term 'reader' to mean the individual or group who are exposed to the myth as opposed to a more literal understanding.

function is to talk about them. Simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification" (*ibid.*: 169-70).

> In passing from history to nature, myth acts economically: it abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences…it organizes a world without contradictions…it establishes a blissful clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves (*ibid.*: 170).

In short, myth, or signification, makes the 'reader' "believe that the connotative meaning [the *concept*] is actually present at the level of denotation [the *form*]" (Storey 1993: 83). It is in this way that myth depoliticises. For something that appears as natural also appears as apolitical (Weber 2009: 7), and need not be questioned, unpacked or interrogated.

Mythologies remains Barthes' most famous work despite his later writings distancing themselves from the book's underlying and implicit structuralism[80]. Inherent to poststructuralism is the rejection of the notion of an "underlying structure upon which meaning can rest secure and satisfied" (Storey 1993: 85). While Barthes' understanding of 'concept' as "confused, made of yielding, shapeless associations…a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation" (Barthes 2009: 143), his form, produced in and through the linguistic system (primary signification), is "abstract" (*ibid.*: 142); it provides an element of stability as the first term in the mythical system. As mentioned above however, a number of scholars have appropriated Barthes' work in a 'postmodernised', or 'poststructuralised', manner. John Storey states that,

> For the post-structuralist Barthes, denotation [primary signification] is no longer a neutral level, it is no more than the last connotation [secondary signification]. Denotation itself is a part of the production of myth. Denotation is just as ideological as connotation (Storey 1993: 85).

This means that in a linguistic system signifiers do not produce signifieds, they merely produce more signifiers. "Meaning as a result is a very unstable thing" (*ibid.*: 85).

How then does this inform my own use of the term 'myth'? In this chapter I focus on two particular myths that emerge from the gendered discourses of basic training; the myth of asexuality and the myth of discipline[81]. I argue that these two myths are integral in

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[80] Neil Badmington writes in the 2009 introduction to *Mythologies*, "the later Barthes had evidently encountered the poststructuralism of Jacques Derrida" (Badmington in Barthes 2009: x).
[81] This is not however, to suggest that these two myths are the only myths to emerge within basic training. Interacting and intersecting with these myths will be numerous others. Notably there will be a myth of 'whiteness' (both Sherene Razack [2004] and Melanie Richter-Montpetit [2007] do excellent racial analyses of militarised masculine identities, and my next chapter foregrounds the importance or race and colonialism) and a myth of 'sameness' (Kovitz points to the ways in which the emphasis on male-female difference "serves to deflect attention from the fault lines along which military masculinity fractures internally" [2003: 9], in particular along rank – and implicitly class – lines).

the production of a discursively idealised liberal warrior. As already stated, specific to a liberal warrior and nation building soldier is their ability both to deploy lethal force and know when to hold it back. They are rational and controlled individuals who have mastered the animalistic traces of unrestrained aggression and violence that define o/Other men and soldiers; in particular the enemy fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to a lesser extent, our American allies and the Afghan National Army (these ideas will be taken up later on). In this mind/body dualism it is not only the animalistic urges of violence and killing that the first term removes, but also the bodily urges and desires of sexuality. Basic training, and the practices and processes it is made up of, is then presented as an asexual experience. Likewise, and related, the ability (when necessary) to deploy legitimate lethal force is part of what locates soldiers in their unique position in society. Underwriting this ability to use legitimate force is the assumption that such violence is controlled, proportionate and disciplined. This ability of a liberal warrior to withhold lethal force is understood as stemming from the high level of discipline instilled within recruits during their training. Understandings of asexuality and discipline are thus central to understanding the ways in which a liberal warrior of contemporary warfare is constituted.

That basic training consists of asexual 'male bonding' practices and instils the discipline and control required for counterinsurgency warfare is taken as a given. While the military, and basic training in particular (due to its single-sex organisation), perhaps offers one of the most intensely homosocial environments in contemporary society, it also maintains a privileged position as being considered one of the most 'masculine' sites in society. As the comments of former soldiers and scholars studying basic training attest, to join the military, to complete its rigorous and demanding training, is to be a 'man'. In order to maintain this simultaneously homosocial and intensely masculinised position, sexuality must be strictly policed. By this I refer not directly to heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality (discourses of heteronormativity however, will be shown to be integral to this policing and expulsion), but to an attempted expulsion of sexuality full-stop. That despite at times the seeming hypersexualised acts that take place within basic training and the military (for example, sexualised jokes at the expense of another soldier or recruit, the simulation of sex acts between soldiers or recruits), the asexuality of the organisation is retained through the markings of specific borders and production of specific subjects. Basic training is thus presented, and assumed to be, a completely asexual environment. In short, and to borrow Barthes' language, a *myth* of asexuality has been constructed. Similarly, when the Ministry of Defence release details of successful missions completed in Iraq or Afghanistan there is a common assumption that it is, in part, down to the degree of training and discipline of our

soldiers. Discipline that has been inculcated through training practices back in the UK and the level of attention to detail it fosters. Discipline that works to prevent the illegitimate use of violence against detainees in British custody, or the 'spilling over' of violence against local communities. Here it is disorder and uncontrollability that is policed and a myth of discipline constituted. Both the construction of these myths, the ways in which we can see them taking place, and the manner in which they break down will be unpacked shortly, but first a brief discussion on the connection between the myths of a poststructuralised Barthes and my understanding of hauntings and ghosts.

Like the bourgeois myths Barthes himself sets out to interrogate, the myths of asexuality and discipline have been naturalised, emptied of their history. Their signifying practices (some of which will be discussed below) – for example, male group nakedness, physical togetherness, the drill square – are assumed to produce and signify the myths themselves. This naturalisation obscures the complex and intersecting discourses at work in constructing these associations, in constituting the myths. For these myths are inherently contextual. Without their history, their location and the gendered discourses that circulate around them, they would be "unstable, [a] nebulous condensation" (Barthes 2009: 143). Alone they have no fixity, alone they cease to exist. A myth's perceived "unity and coherence are above all due to its function" (*ibid*.: 143). It is an attempt to pay attention to this context, to what gives the myths of asexuality and discipline content and form, which this chapter attempts to reveal. It is to go on a 'ghost hunt' and reveal what Gordon refers to as the ghostly matters that haunt, long after they have been supposedly exorcised. As a poststructuralised reading of Barthes however, there will be no 'true' meaning behind the myth, no pure or singular denotation that constructs it. Instead, the gestures, acts and deeds that signify asexuality, which signify discipline, are themselves connotations. They too only exist – inasmuch as they make sense – through the particular discursive structures that they emerge in and through. They too are just as fluid, just as alterable, as what they signify. In turn, what they signify (in this case asexuality, discipline) is not simply the 'closure' of the myth, it too goes on to point elsewhere, signify something else. It is in effect a cycle of signifying and re-signification, one with no stable foundations, no completed myths. Like my methodology of ghosts and hauntings, my use of a 'poststructuralised' Barthes' myth indicates the (im)possibility – the duality, the simultaneity, the struggle between that which has been included and that which has been mapped out, and the presence of hauntings that have supposedly been expelled – to that which it refers. That soldiers imbued with the myths of asexuality and discipline, will be disrupted by *un*-visible hauntings lingering outside boundaries that have been drawn, encroaching on that which is 'inside', on that which 'is' a

liberal warrior. Discursively idealised liberal warriors cannot after all be completely divested of their sexual bodily desires, their irrationality, their uncontrollability. Borders mapped around these liberal warriors are not fixed, but porous, unstable and 'ghostly'.

MYTH OF ASEXUALITY

As already noted, the military, and basic training in particular, offers one of the most intensely homosocial environments in contemporary society. An exclusively male environment, recruits sleep, eat and shower together. Within this setting, routine, male group nakedness has been, and continues to be, a persistent feature of the British military. Such practices of nakedness may be incidental, such as soldiers showering, getting changed together, or stripping off clothes in the heat of the desert whilst on a tour of duty. For example, Steven McLaughlin recalls arriving at his new battalion of Royal Green Jackets to be greeted by "soldiers in various states of undress" (2006: 107), while Patrick Hennessey's reflections on his time spent in Iraq and Afghanistan frequently mention the stripping off of clothes for sunbathing opportunities, with his first memoir including a photograph of this activity (2009: 142). There are also more specific practices of group nudity. During my fieldwork at Catterick Barracks, alongside the ubiquitous pictures of naked/semi-naked women that adorned soldiers' bedroom walls, there would frequently be a photograph of the soldier himself, typically with a couple of friends, all naked, save for a strategically-placed SA80 assault rifle or other piece of weaponry. Numerous military or regimental 'games' also feature nudity, perhaps most infamously 'Naked Bar'[82], a drinking game in which once the call of 'Naked Bar' is given, participants – who tend to be in a drinking establishment at the time – immediately remove all their clothing and continue to drink.

While nakedness, or certainly the level of 'physical togetherness', is at its highest during a recruit's time in basic training[83] with the collective existence of shared showering, dressing and living, even when soldiers gain a degree of privacy and personal space, group nudity continues in the games soldiers play, on exercise and during a tour of duty. Woodward and Winter recall one former Royal Marine telling them – taking care to emphasise the completely "routine and non-sexual nature of this nakedness" – that "being

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[82] Infamous because in 2008, eight British Commandos were sent home from a field training exercise in Norway after engaging in the game in a local pub in the town of Harstad. It was reported that the men stripped naked, urinated on one another, insulted locals and groped female customers (*London Evening Standard*, 2008).

[83] In part because of just how regulated recruits' timetables are, but also because there is a push by the British Army to give all 'passed out' soldiers their own rooms as opposed to the shared living and sleeping arrangements of basic training.

naked together with other men is a completely normal part of contemporary British military life" (2007: 68). In this homosocial context, group nakedness is just another body practice (like eating together, wearing the same uniform, or physical training) that works to produce a bonded team of militarised and masculine men (*ibid.*: 68). As numerous authors[84] have pointed to, much of the discourse surrounding military life is concerned with this important bond, or even love, between 'the boys'. "The bond is one that many soldiers report is stronger than any relationship they had previously experienced, including familial and intimate relations" (Whitworth 2004: 158). There is a sense that recruits have entered a new family, the military family. Theirs is a family of men, a 'warrior brotherhood'. Nakedness in this context represents unity, fraternity, the singularity of male bodies. It serves as an "insistent reminder that the group are 'one body'; that is, male bodies" (Woodward and Winter 2007: 68).

The production of a liberal warrior through such practices of 'male bonding' and homosociality however, relies upon the perceived expulsion of sexuality – and specifically *homo*sexuality – from basic training. Sexuality, with its embodied, emotional and animalistic connotations, is located on the 'Othered' side of the mind/body binary so central to a liberal warrior. Homosexuality meanwhile effects a double negation. Not only is it situated alongside the 'body' half of the dualism inasmuch as it is sexual and animalistic, but it is also an open transgression of the heterosexual norm that pervades military life. In short, homosexual potential threatens to disrupt and trouble the homosocial 'doings' of a militarised masculine liberal warrior, and it is the whole indefinite domain of the 'non-heterosexual' that *haunts* a heteronormative liberal warrior. While contemporary constructions of a discursively idealised soldier may have taken on and co-opted particular 'feminised' characteristics and traits[85], disrupting what have been traditionally understood as 'masculine' and 'feminine' markers, the heteronormativity of the figure has remained unchanged. For example, while idealised soldiering conceptions may have shifted and appropriated certain characteristics while discarding others in line with understandings of the 'new man' of the 1990s[86], heterosexuality remained intact. A soldier may now engage in the

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[84] For example please see: Arkin and Dobrofsky (1978); Hockey (1986; 2003); Karner (1998); Whitworth (2004); Woodward and Winter (2007).

[85] This is an indication of the (im)possible constitutive dynamic of a liberal warrior: that what was once excluded can now be 'within'.

[86] The 'new man' phenomena refers to a specifically 'Western' reformulation of masculinity (with some authors claiming it is now the West's hegemonic form of masculinity; see Pierrette Hondagneau-Sotelo and Michal Messner [1994] and Niva [1998]) whereby men are more 'in touch' with their 'feminine' side, contributing more to domestic work and childcare and publicly expressing emotional sensitivity. All of this is achieved without the loss of "their class and gender privileges" (Hooper 2001: 73), nor a destabilising of their heterosexuality.

more ('feminine') nurturing and care-giving activities of peacekeeping, and may openly speak about his love for his men or his grief at their loss, however, his assumed (hetero)sexuality is never questioned. If a liberal warrior is then to be marked as implicitly heterosexual, it is important that any practices of group nudity and 'soldierly love' are carefully policed against encroachments of hauntings of homosexual potential.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick suggests that homosociality is frequently applied to activities such as 'male bonding', and "which may, as in our society, be characterized by intense homophobia, fear and hatred of homosexuality" (1985: 1). Building on Sedgwick's observation, homophobia within the British military (and other homosocial institutions or occurrences of 'male bonding') can be understood as marking a boundary between non-sexual male behaviour (a 'doing' or 'making' of a liberal warrior), and sexual male behaviour (an 'undoing' or 'unmaking' of a liberal warrior). As authors writing on militarised masculinities have demonstrated[87], basic training, and military life more generally, is set against a backdrop of heteronormativity and is aggressively heterosexual (apparent in sexualised and homophobic insults and macho ethos of the barrack room). Such discursive structures operate to expel homosexuality, and mark the intensely homosocial practices of basic training as definitively asexual. For example, the all-male environment of basic training and combat teams, the camaraderie and closeness of troops, and even the practices of specific male group nakedness discussed above are all identified as homosocial activities inasmuch as they occur in same-sex environments and are not sexual in nature. What however, about those activities which appear intensely sexual or as homoerotic? Patrick Hennessey writes about the

> bizarrely sexual banter which characterized isolated fighting platoons…the constant gags that this young Guardsman or that young Gunner was looking prettier the longer the tour went on, that it was only gay if you pushed back, were too oft repeated to be merely an extension of the default lad's mag (*sic*) humour (2012: 256-7).

Or the rumours that "the lads on the Section Commanders' Battle Course who delighted in shocking their new officers by noshing each other off at the bar" (*ibid.*: 256)[88].

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[87] For example please see, Arkin and Dobrofsky 1978; Beevor 1991; and, Morgan 1994.

[88] A rumour similar to that which I heard from a fellow researcher on the British military who told me during his time spent interviewing members of the British Army, an officer informed him that the Parachute Regiment were known as the 'gay' regiment, with homosexual sexual activities common amongst members, none of whom however would self-define as homosexual themselves. This is particularly interesting given that both among members of the Parachute Regiment and military commentators, the 'Paras' are considered an elite fighting force.

If what haunts the myth of asexuality and a liberal warrior produced through it is homosexual potential and the indefinite domain of the non-heterosexual, then it is anecdotes and 'banter' like this that are the *ghosts* that give notice to these hauntings. The materialisations of these ghosts locate homoeroticism and hypersexuality centre-stage and reveal the (im)possibility of a 'completely' heterosexual liberal warrior and asexual military. Instead, homosexual potential is always already present and ghosts that give notice to it are revealed in liberal warriors' attempts at proving they are otherwise.

Despite this however, such practices are commonly regarded as asexual and soldiering subjects produced through them as resolutely heterosexual. In his discussion of private military security contractors[89], Paul Higate draws attention to the ways in which this steering of a careful course between the homoerotic and homosexual, where the latter is rejected, can be seen as a statement to others in the group as confirmation of the resilience of heterosexuality amongst 'the brothers'. Such heteronormative interaction is boundary marking. It ensures homoerotic play does not stray into homosexual practice and "heterosexual resolve is found to be resilient in the face of the test" (2012b: 457). Heterosexual bodies are then (re)constituted as heterosexual in and through these homoerotic and hypersexualised – yet simultaneously asexual – performatives, while the practices themselves remain paradoxically asexual in and through their doings by heterosexual bodies. The relationship between these asexual practices and heterosexual bodies is co-constitutive. That the contradictory moves of first, hypersexual and homoerotic practices rendered asexual, and second, the subjectivities of those engaged in them (re)confirmed as heterosexual, can be made (if not always fully achieved) only if there is an assumption that a clear and 'hard' border exists between the homosexual and homosocial (and implicitly heterosexual). That the homosocial and homosexual are revealed as situated not on an unbroken continuum but are instead radically disconnected from one another (Sedgewick 1985: 1-2). It is specific practices of homophobia that mark this boundary and disconnect this continuum.

Ghosts however, do not just appear and give notice to the haunting of homosexual potential in homoerotic and hypersexualised acts, ghosts appear in any number of the indefinite domain of 'non-heterosexual' performances, including: crying; failing to complete a physical training exercise; or simply looking 'effeminate'[90]. Throughout a liberal warrior's

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[89] I am not suggesting that the militarised masculine subjectivities produced within private military security companies and national militaries are the same, however, as Higate notes in a different article, "there exists a good deal of continuity between military and PMSCs' culture" (2012a: 328).
[90] Such 'non-heterosexual' practices are also commonly associated with the feminine in wider culture; for example, emotionality, weakness, looking feminine.

career, he will risk homophobic abuse (and potentially worse) if marked by any one of these 'ghostly' signs. Soldiers deemed by their peers to be 'marked' by homosexuality are at risk of encountering violences, be they verbal or physical. An adjutant of one regiment that had suffered a spate of bullying between recruits noted that victims tended to be those deemed as 'effeminate' (one such 'marker' of the haunting and disruptive homosexuality) in appearance or manner (Beevor 1991: 30). The materiality and gestures of the victims' bodies worked to signal their potential transgression from the masculine norm of heterosexuality, and violence is directed towards those that threaten the idea of a broken continuum between homosociality and homosexuality (for example the homosexual or effeminate recruit). Violence and homophobia is used to police an "intense fear and loathing which aggressively male groups have of their own homosexual potential" (*ibid*.: 30). To police against the possibility that homosociality and homosexuality are not two distinct, symmetrically opposing positions, but are in fact intimately related.

This disconnection of the homosocial and homosexual is integral to the marking of not just a boundary between non-sexual male behaviour and sexual male behaviour, but also to the mapping of a border around a militarised masculine liberal warrior. The asexual/hypersexual, heterosexual/homosexual, distinction, and concomitant expulsion and rejection of the haunting (homo)/sexuality marks the bodies of recruits as not motivated or distracted by their bodily, sexual passions, but as subjects capable of controlling them. The myth of asexuality works to construct this double boundary. It naturalises associations between homosocial, and at times homoerotic, 'male bonding' activities and asexuality, and normalises heterosexuality. The base, bodily passions and desires of sexuality, in particular a transgressive potential for homosexuality, are obscured, considered 'outside' and 'Other' to the idealised subject under construction. It is then, in part, in and through this myth of asexuality that a rational and disembodied liberal warrior is constructed.

MYTH OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is one of the central tenets of the British Army, mentioned no fewer than fifteen times in their handbook on 'Values and Standards' (MoD n.d.k). Discipline is purported to be essential for combat effectiveness and the "primary antidote to fear" (*ibid.*). With the current shift towards counterinsurgency, and the attendant need for soldiers to be able to not only deploy lethal force but also be capable of holding it back, the emphasis on, and privileging of, discipline is ever-increasing. While self-discipline is proclaimed to be the

"best" kind of discipline – "innate, not imposed" (*ibid.*) – military training aims to instil and strengthen such discipline[91].

Much of basic training is seemingly structured around this need for discipline. From the rigid timetabling, to 'personal administration' and its prescribed routines for the ways in which a soldier looks after himself and his kit, to the fethishistic obsession with personal appearance and domesticity, and, of course, hour after hour spent on the drill square – an activity whose place in an operational context has long ceased to be recognised – with movements broken down to their constituent parts and repeated endlessly to shouted commands. Hockey writes that while "[t]here is undoubtedly a logic to such explanations" – for example, that keeping your personal space strictly ordered means that while on operations, in adverse conditions, a solider will know exactly where everything is – he also argues that such reasoning "tend[s] to obscure the fact that one of the main aims of enforcing such detailed, and often petty, orders is to inculcate obedience to the military authority" (1986: 22). 'Official' (inasmuch as it appears in MoD literature, or on the British Army webpage) reasoning for military discipline largely centres around the need for disciplined soldiers on the battlefield: "that all soldiers will obey orders, under the worst conditions of war" (MoD n.d.k). That soldiers can wield legitimate violence in part defines them as soldiers (Woodward and Winter 2007: 104). While the term 'trained killer' is sensationalist and reductive, there remains a degree of accuracy that soldiers, infantrymen in particular, are trained to close in on the enemy and kill (often at close quarters) as effectively as possible. Underlying this, there is an implicit assumption that violence that is legitimate is also controlled. Basic training, with its endless proclamations of discipline, teaches recruits the ways in which violence can and should be *legitimately* employed; for example, the 'rules of engagement' in place and the importance of safeguarding non-combatants etc.

Like the myth of asexuality, the myth of discipline operates by marking borders, drawing lines around what can be demarcated as disciplined, and thus integral to a liberal warrior, and what is demarcated as outside. Whether a recruit experiences discipline with regard to their appearance, personal belongings, on the drill square, or during weapons training, what is being expelled remains the same. For the myth of discipline to be

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[91] It should be noted that while the term 'discipline' is used constantly within the military, the assumptions behind it and exactly what it refers to, are rarely made explicit. Precisely what is meant by 'military discipline' is hard to isolate. Writing in 1986 Hockey stated expectations of discipline centred on a recruit's "appearance, cleanliness, and respect for rank and tradition". Above all, Hockey noted, "unquestioning obedience" was viewed as the lynchpin of military discipline (1986: 23). Today however, such 'unquestioning obedience' is less prioritised in view of the fast-changing landscape of counterinsurgency. Rather, soldiers are now expected to be capable of quickly adapting to changing local engagement and combat circumstances. Today, discipline may be more readily associated with the capacity to abide by strict rules of engagement and know when and what level of kinetic force to deploy.

maintained it is the hauntings of disorder, messiness and uncontrollability that must be exorcised. A disciplined soldier will be capable of obeying orders at high speed and under intense pressure, while an undisciplined soldier risks being hysterical, irrational and incapable of fighting in battle. Whereas the embodiment of the ghost of asexuality took the form of a homosexual man (specifically the stereotype of the lustful, predatory gay man: "lusting after their buddies in the showers and 'hitting on' adamantly heterosexual men" [Cohn 1998: 142]), the ghost of discipline would be embodied in the figure of a hysterical, irrational, out-of-control woman, immortalised in Victorian paintings of women fainting. This association between a soldier incapable of fighting and a hysterical woman was most explicitly stated during World War I, which saw numerous cases of so-called 'shell shock' amongst male fighters. Doctors treating such men noted that "the hysterical soldier was seen as simple, emotional, unthinking, passive, suggestible, dependent, and weak – very much the same constellation of traits associated with the hysterical woman" (Showalter 1987: 175).

Interestingly however, a lack of discipline is also associated with an excess of masculinity, a hypermasculinised identity. Such an 'excess' is typically associated with easy recourse to, or extreme enactments of, violence. Alywin-Foster, for example, notes that the US Army was considered to be too "kinetic": "shorthand for saying U.S. Army personnel were too inclined to consider offensive operations and destruction of the insurgent as the key to a given situation" (2005: 4). Alywin-Foster claims that US forces were more "offensively minded than their Coalition counterparts", that their "Rules of Engagement (ROE) were more lenient than other nations"', and that "too much of the [US] force remained conceptually in warfighting mode in the post combat phase [in Iraq]" (*ibid.*: 4-5). Unlike British soldiers particularly attuned to counterinsurgency operations, Alywin-Foster believed that the majority of American troops held a different opinion towards the value of lethal force. While British troops understood the need for popular support amongst the local population for the political campaign to be successful, American troops "considered that the only effective, and morally acceptable, COIN [counterinsurgency] strategy was to kill or capture all terrorists and insurgents; they saw military destruction of the enemy as a strategic goal in its own right" (*ibid.*: 5). In his study of British private military security contractor (PMSC) memoirs Paul Higate notes a similar binary framing that British contractors deployed: one of the "jumpy, trigger happy [American] 'cowboy' versus the cool [British] professional" (2012a: 322)[92]. For the PMSCs detailed in Higate's article, the "low profile" of the "quintessential understated Brit" (*ibid.*: 331) is juxtaposed with the "gung-ho" (*ibid.*: 330) American with a "shoot first policy, a shoot-first mindset" (*ibid.*: 333).

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[92] Higate does make explicit that the picture is a lot more nuanced than this simplified dualism.

This construction of a restrained and disciplined British soldier through (and against) its relation with 'The Americans' is, to a certain extent, mirrored in British soldiers' relations with Afghan security forces, whose training they are responsible for. Unlike British liberal warriors, trained in counterinsurgency and winning 'hearts and minds', the Afghan National Army (ANA) are depicted as hypermasculinised and excessively violent[93]. In his second memoir which reflects on his time spent mentoring the ANA, Patrick Hennessey recalls a number of anecdotes centred on one particular ANA soldier: Qiam. Qiam is described by Hennessey as '*kharkus*', an Afghan word that has no direct translation in English but refers to a mix of crazy and brave. In one particularly memorable combat scene after an Afghan policeman blames his refusal to fight on the fact he does not have body armour, Qiam strips out of his armour and clothing, throws his gun at another policeman, picks up a wrench and charges into the battle (Hennessey 2012: 87-8). While there is no doubt admiration in Hennessey's writings, there is also reservation. Qiam's behaviour is, after all, not that of a liberal warrior. Unlike the controlled and disciplined fighting of British soldiers, and in the name of state policy objectives, the fighting of the ANA is more chaotic, more violent – *kharkus*. Such portrayals draw on familiar Orientalist imaginings of tribal warfare and primitive fighters. Such tribal fighting is primordial, more akin to nature than the highly technologized British soldiers and their complex battle plans. A liberal warrior is therefore a very specific conception of masculinity, and one that discipline is integral to, ensuring just the 'right' amount of masculinity. The 'offensively minded' and 'gung ho' attitudes of American soldiers, and the violent and chaotic fighting of the ANA, provide a prism and counterpoint through which a British liberal warrior can emerge as a perfectly disciplined, perfectly masculinised, counterinsurgency soldier.

Upon entering basic training recruits offer up their bodies as the primary site of inscription for both a militarised masculine identity and the marking of discipline. The surface and appearance of recruits' bodies comes to constitute "a locus of control and strategy for enforcing discipline" (Hockey 2002: 150-1), with all aspects of their physical presentation now subject to superiors' inspection and control. Hockey details the minutiae

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[93] The ANA are also simultaneously, and paradoxically, feminised, with comments made in soldiers' memoirs with regard to their 'effeminate' bodily gestures, or their unwillingness and/or fear of fighting. Hennessey recalls that prior to his deployment to Afghanistan the rumours heard in training with regard to the ANA

> ...were that as often as not they were fighting for both sides or simply ran away. The pictures we had seen of Afghan soldiers were mostly of doped-up *chai* [tea] boys with thickly kohled eyes and flowers in their rifles; these guys were barely men, let alone soldiers (2012: 30, emphasis in original).

of ways this discipline can be illustrated. For example, "the requirement for all buttons on uniforms to be turned a particular way, laces in boots to be untwisted, [and that is] to say nothing of the need for clothes to be kept almost pathologically clean" (*ibid.*: 151). Boots must be polished and 'bulled' to look like black glass (Beevor 1991: 17), and the badge on berets positioned to a precise spot and angle (Hockey 2002: 151). These fetishistic obsessions with the ordering and appearance of the body are mirrored in the levels of anxiety a new recruit may experience with regard to the standard and level of domesticity expected of them within the military. Clothing and equipment are expected to be kept obsessively clean, beds made in particular ways, and "the ritual geometry of locker layout, with every article of kit positioned in a prescribed manner" (Beevor 1991: 18). Hennessey describes the level of detail that is expected in the prescribed layout of a recruit's room:

> Cupboard doors are open to display everything hanging in correct order from left to right. Drawers are pulled out each one an inch further than the other in descending order to reveal the perfect formations of underwear (socks correctly bundled into a 'smile' and not a 'frown') (2009: 41).

Both Hennessey and Hockey detail the practice of recruits making their 'bed-blocks'[94] the night before, sleeping wrapped in a single blanket on top of the mattress (Hockey 1986: 48), with Hennessey resorting to ironing down the crumpled creases of his own sheets while they're still on the bed (Hennessey 2009: 40-1). Hennessey also details the "screaming rage[s]" the Colour Sergeants responsible for room inspections could be capable of, which – according to Hennessey – would always come as the true purpose of the inspections was "to find fault no matter what" (*ibid.*: 42). For example, writing in his diary, Hennessey recalls that

> [t]hree days ago during my morning room inspection the bristles of my toothbrush were facing left – an offence which resulted in the throwing of said toothbrush, along with everything else on the shelf above the sink, out of the window. Yesterday I took great care in facing them to the right – an offence which resulted in everything being thrown into the corridor (*ibid.*: 39).

While such preoccupations with appearance and domesticity may appear as paradoxically 'feminine'[95] in the masculine figure of a liberal warrior, such practices are in fact integral to its constitution. Under construction is a very particular soldiering subjectivity, one that is intensely disciplined and capable of engaging in effective controlled violence as well as withholding it. It is this control and effectiveness that is achieved through the

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[94] The particular way the blankets, pillow and sheets of a recruit's bed must be folded each morning.
[95] Susan Brownmiller, in her text on femininity, identifies that "to be obsessively involved in inconsequential details [of clothing] on a serious basis" to be a key feature of femininity (1984: 81).

expulsion of, not the 'feminine' traits of cleanliness, obedience and domesticity, but through the demarcation and separation from, messiness, disorganisation and uncontrollability[96]. As the British Army website states in its discussion of the CIC training: "the more organised a man is, the easier he will find it to live like a soldier" (MoD n.d.f). The myth of discipline ensures that seemingly oxymoronic traits ('controlled violence', 'masculine domesticity') are held together and marks a border between the potentially feminising performances of domesticity and taking care of your appearance, and the masculine soldiering performances of instilling self-restraint and control. At the same time the myth demarcates a very specific conception of masculinity, which has discipline at its centre and control of the violence it can legitimately wield.

THE BODY RESISTS[97]

In short, through the myths of asexuality and discipline, a soldier is produced who is both a war fighter and a humanitarian, whose rational mind is separated from bodily (sexual) urges, and is capable of cool reason over rash emotion. Inscribing this identity upon the bodies of recruits requires an expulsion of the messiness of embodied experience, and a clear demarcation mapped between an uncontrolled, disordered body, and a disciplined and controlled (militarised masculine) subject. However, just as Sedgwick appeals to us to "hypothesize the potential unbrokeness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual" (1985: 1-2), the boundary between asexual and homosexual performative doings, and control and messiness – and thus the borders of a liberal warrior – marked as 'hard' by the myths of asexuality and discipline, must instead be viewed as soft and porous. Hauntings that have attempted to be expelled pass through these borders, encroach on the subject they trace, and are signalled towards through the materialisation of ghosts. Aaron Belkin has argued that in the process of working to produce masculine warriors, those who embody masculinity have actually been required "to enter into intimate relationships with femininity, queerness, and other non-masculine foils, not just to disavow them" (2012: 4). Rather,

> [t]he military has motivated service members to fight by forcing them to embody traits and identifications that have been framed as binary oppositions –

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[96] While cleanliness, domesticity and obedience can be understood as 'feminine' characteristics, so too can the traits of messiness, disorganisation and uncontrollability. In the rational/emotional binary, it is the emotional that is associated with the feminine, with emotions considered to be messy, disorganised, uncontrollable (think again to the example of the hysterical, irrational woman in Victorian medicine, a legacy that remains today in hysterectomy's etymological roots: the surgical excision of the uterus).
[97] This heading is taken from Higate (1998).

masculine/feminine, strong/weak, dominant/subordinate, victor/victim, civilized/barbaric, clean/dirty, straight/queer, legible/illegible, stoic/emotional – and to deny those embodiments at the same time (*ibid*.: 4).

This is the (im)possibility of a militarised masculine liberal warrior subjectivity: that both terms are always already included and at the same time the latter term denied, ignored or rendered *un*-visible. It will however, be this latter term along with the whole indefinite domain of that which does not conform with the former term, that returns[98] to haunt, and through its haunting reveal its always already presence and the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior. It is through the emergence of ghosts – concrete materialisations of an aspect of a haunting – that notice can be given to the porosity of borders mapped and the precariousness of the liberal warrior subject being traced. Homoerotic and hypersexualised play and language between recruits and soldiers have already been identified as one such ghostly appearance that signals to the incompleteness of the myth of asexuality. These are not however, the only signals, the only materialisations of ghosts.

For example, while the experience of battle is often posited at the heart of military life, multiple contradictions are found at this supposed core (Morgan 1994: 176). Emotions largely denied or marked as 'effeminate' or 'homosexual' during basic training – pain, fear, sadness – are experienced openly on the battlefield. Here, far from being signs of effeminacy and/or a latent or potential homosexuality, this expression of emotions is expected. "[T]ears are found at the heart of the military experience" (*ibid*., 177), and are evidence of the 'warrior brotherhood'. Likewise, while the discipline imposed during basic training is explained in terms of a preparedness for combat – "good discipline means that all soldiers will obey orders, under the worst conditions of war" (MoD n.d.k) – the battlefield itself is not a site where disorder, messiness, hysteria and irrationality can be expelled. Experiences of war, and decisions made in the midst of combat, are not controlled, expected or ordered. During a single four hour battle, Hennessey tells of 30mm cannon fire being aimed right across their toes by a pilot receiving grid references "in the midst of confusion"; of "blue-on-blue cannon fire from the Apache" coming from one direction and enemy fire from the other leaving Hennessey and his soldiers nowhere to go; and calling in a Hellfire strike without knowing if the pilot would "drop the missile on us as well" (2009: 234).

On an almost absurd level, the pathological cleanliness and fetishistic habits of domesticity that so dominate a recruit's life during basic training are impossible to maintain. In the dusty environments of Iraq and Afghanistan, where sandstorms are common, basic

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[98] Indeed, to claim that a materialisation of the latter term is 'returning' to haunt is not entirely accurate as it will have never been 'fully' or 'successfully' exorcised. The term however, will continue to be used to indicate the assumption that such an expulsion or exorcism has taken place.

training's expectations of neatly pressed trousers, and particularly washed and shaved bodies, are rendered ridiculous. The messiness of a recruit's physical appearance that had been expelled through daily routine, inspection and discipline, return not only to haunt at the margins, but at full force. Beards and hair grow[99], soldiers may go days without showering, and every body part, piece of clothing, and bit of equipment will be covered in a film of sand. Rather than the exact placing of regimental badges on uniforms, entire sections of uniforms are discarded in soldiers' attempts to survive the heat of the desert or work on their tans before returning to the UK[100]. The border that marked a disciplined soldierly body, delineating the appearance, movement and physicality of a liberal warrior is shown during a tour of duty not to be hard and fixed, but soft and 'ghostly'[101].

Even however, during the highly regulated environment of basic training, the bodies of recruits defy the boundaries placed on and around them. John Hockey states that

> [w]hile the shaming ineptness of dress they [new recruits] show in the first month motivates nearly all recruits to smarten themselves up, this aspiration is rarely in strict conformity to the standards of neatness, cleanliness and uniformity demanded by their Training Team (1986: 51).

Rather, recruits are keen to achieve a better standard of style: "They shrink their berets, adjust their combat smocks, place their trouser bottoms over their puttees so that they hang over their boots in a certain fashion, bend the peaks of their parade-caps, and so on" (*ibid*.: 51). Style is one of the small, but numerous ways in which a recruit can express some autonomy (*ibid*.: 51), that their body can resist the demands and expectations placed upon it. Similarly, bodily deviance takes place during physical training and drill to not only assert a degree of individuation, but also to draw attention to the incompleteness of discipline, to the possibility of its subversion. For example, on the assault course recruits "dodge around obstacles rather than go over or under them just as soon as their instructors gaze lingers elsewhere and much the same pattern of behaviour takes place within the gymnasium" (*ibid*.: 49). Hockey, again, relates a particular drill period where commands were deliberately misinterpreted,

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[99] In letters to *Soldier*, the British Army's official magazine, an exchange took place regarding "scruffy" looking soldiers with "part-grown beards and overgrown locks". The exchange included a number of army personnel of different ranks and arms. Reasons forwarded for the growth in facial hair in Afghanistan included gaining respect from Afghan elders ("those with a 'voice' in Afghanistan…all have beards") and the makeshift tour conditions with only enough water for drinking and cooking (2011: 63).
[100] As already noted, Patrick Hennessey's first memoir of his tours in Iraq and Afghanistan includes numerous references to time spent sunbathing or "tanning" (*ibid*.:155) during operations.
[101] Perhaps one of the few practices of basic training discipline that continues to be practiced religiously during a tour of duty is that of looking after personal equipment. However, even then, soldiers are vulnerable to their weapons failing or jamming during firefights.

so for example a 'right turn' results in a left turn which results in the platoon nearly colliding with another which is also drilling, or a 'halt' is ignored so that the platoon marches blithely off the drill square onto a flower bed (2002: 152).

As Hockey states, "[e]ven in circumstances where control of the infantryman's body would appear to be absolute, it is possible to resist such control" (*ibid*.: 152).

Both on the battlefield and in the highly regulated environment of basic training then, ghosts emerge. They materialise in the tears and open display of denigrated emotions, in the chaos and confusion of combat, and in the small, everyday resistances of a recruit's body. These appearances give notice to the impossibility of the myths and the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior.

While such deviation from the norm may appear obvious (the expression of fear or sadness on the battlefield), or resistance appear small (in the case of 'styling' the uniform), such lived, embodied experiences are significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, that the disciplined, logistical and docile body that is deemed to be required for the counterinsurgency warfare of contemporary conflicts cannot be completely achieved. That the disembodied, Cartesian liberal warrior who is capable of transcending their bodily needs, desires and irrationality through the expulsion of the 'messiness' of human sexuality and emotionality is an (im)possibility. "Contrary to liberal accounts of agency dependent on Cartesian dualisms of body and mind, we produce and are produced by our bodies" (Basham 2012: 14). Thus, what is attempted to be expelled in the quest for this liberal warrior subjectivity will always return as the simultaneity and duality of what is understood as integral to a liberal warrior and what is understood as 'outside', 'excluded', its 'excesses'. Furthermore, this expulsion will be found to be central and inescapable from the subjectivity under production. Secondly, and related, such disruptions demonstrate the mythical status of the assumed asexuality of basic training practices and a disciplined recruit/soldier, specifically a 'poststructuralised' Barthes myth. For it is not only that the gestures, acts and deeds that work to signify asexuality or discipline – homosocial male group nudity, perfectly bulled boots and pressed trousers – fail to do so completely as the appearances of ghosts demonstrate, but that they in and of themselves have no stable foundations, no fixed meanings. They too are only what Barthes would understand to be connotations. While open expressions of fear, pain and sadness during basic training serve to mark a recruit as weak, effeminate and as a potential transgressor of the heterosexual norm, on the battlefield

these same emotions work to signify 'true' soldiering and membership of the warrior brotherhood. Importantly in this specific case, they may come to signify empathy and thoughtfulness – key attributes of a liberal warrior, and an example of a militarised masculine subject having to engage in an intimate relation with characteristics or traits that had previously, and may have otherwise, been disavowed. Finally, and as will come apparent in my next chapter, these seemingly benign appearances of ghosts, and the hauntings they signal towards, will be shown to be intimately connected with far less benign ghostly materialisations. Instead, ghosts will appear as abused bodies, torture victims, and bloodied and bruised corpses. The context then is everything; there is no stable start-point, meaning is always contingent. Mythical liberal warriors are produced through myths of asexuality and discipline, themselves made up of mythical actions, mythical idea(l)s. No one part can be fully separated or explained without the others, and the specificities of each only understood within the context.

As the British military, in line with other 'Western' militaries, has experienced a shift in its focus from an institution almost exclusively concerned with war fighting, to an institution that is now concerned with nation building, there has been a concomitant shifting of what is now considered a discursively idealised militarised masculine identity. While the Rambo-esque hypermasculinised soldier has long been considered at odds with British military identity – if indeed it ever was – the technologically intelligent, behind-the-scenes techno-warrior of the first Gulf War is now too distant, too disengaged, for the counterinsurgency warfare of Iraq and Afghanistan. Emerging because of and through this turn towards counterinsurgency, a soldier is produced that is expected to deploy the same level and skill of lethal violence that has marked the identities of soldiers for centuries, as well as the technological intelligence that signifies all modern day 'advanced' militaries. Simultaneously however, a counterinsurgency soldier must be able to engage with the local community, play an active role in the rebuilding and reconstruction of the host nation, and know when to hold back from using 'kinetic power' despite potentially dangerous situations. A discursively idealised militarised masculine subject in this context is then both a war fighter and humanitarian. He is what Alison Howell has termed a "liberal warrior" (2011: 1).

It is the role of basic training to produce these perfectly controlled, perfectly rational and perfectly violent soldiers. Long identified as a privileged site of construction for militarised masculinities, the practices of basic training have been detailed and discursively unpacked by numerous authors seeking to explain the ways in which recruits enter as

'civilians' and leave as 'soldiers'. Feminists and non-feminists alike who have explored the site of basic training have pointed to the masculinist discourses of power that soldiers are produced in and through, and that operate to privilege particular 'manly' attributes and characteristics. Attributes and characteristics that can also be traced to the supposedly neutral, but implicitly masculine, white, heterosexual, Cartesian subject. Emerging from, and reinforcing, these gendered discourses are particular myths. Myths that are integral to the constituting of a liberal warrior, and myths that ultimately reveal the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior.

The construction of a liberal warrior relies upon the maintaining of borders tracing the subject, as well as maintaining the illusion of particular binaries including: masculine/feminine; mind/body; straight/queer; rational/irrational; discipline/uncontrolled. Binaries that hold within and work to constitute a generalised story, or familiar feminist fable, of militarised masculinity. The myths of asexuality and discipline operate in part to mark as hard borders between the two opposing terms and in turn map the boundaries of a liberal warrior. An intensely homosocial environment, basic training relies on the myth of asexuality for its exclusively male recruits to take part in otherwise hypersexualised and homoeroticised practices, while the myth of discipline underlines the production of disciplined and controlled exercisers of legitimate violence. The making of a discursively idealised liberal warrior relies on these myths, and the borders they mark, to exorcise hauntings of (homo)sexuality, hysteria and messiness from the bodies of recruits. Through an aggressively heterosexual environment and implicit (and at times explicit) uses of homophobia, gestures and behaviours marked as 'homosexual', or simply 'not heterosexual', are expelled. Similarly, from rigid timetabling to the broken down manoeuvres on the drill square, to the minutiae of how a recruit washes, shaves and dresses himself, discipline is imposed upon the body of the recruit and the potential for messiness, disorder and uncontrollability exorcised. The body however – the messy, embodied, unpredictable human body – resists. Borders marked by the myths of asexuality and discipline between asexuality and (homo)sexuality, between discipline and uncontrollability, are shown to be not hard and fixed, but soft and ghostly. The gestures, acts and deeds that could at one point signify a departure from a liberal warrior subject, may at others seemingly work to reinforce and rearticulate that subjectivity, and vice-versa – ghosts appear both within and outside boundaries marked. These materialisations of ghosts and the failure of a clear demarcation of the myths and what they signify draws attention to not only the (im)possibility of the myths themselves, but also to the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior.

It is then this marking of a border, and the failure to successfully do so, that the rest of this thesis now turns to. It is to start paying attention to hauntings that have been rendered *un*-visible. I have already revealed some of the slippages that take place within the highly regimented environment of basic training, to the appearances of ghosts, as well as further disruptions (and appearances) as these carefully constructed liberal warriors make their way from training centres in the UK to operational bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. Confronted with the ambiguity and confusion of war, and the creeping return of the messiness of the human body, further cracks and ruptures begin to appear in the already-fragile borders of the liberal warrior. In this chaotic and uncontrollable environment of combat, and as precariously identified soldiers come into contact with bodies marked as 'Other' along racial, cultural and religious lines, this thesis will now explore the ways in which attempts at redrawing and remapping these boundaries leads to more obscene and more violent ghostly materialisations, with these 'Othered' bodies the site of their emergence.

CHAPTER FOUR

COLONIAL LOGICS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST THE 'OTHER'

In 2003 British soldiers who were part of an operation to stop Iraqi civilian looters from stealing food and humanitarian aid from the British-run 'Camp Breadbasket' (so-called because of the camp's links with the UN World Food Programme) rounded up suspected thieves and subjected them to physical and sexual abuse[102]. During the abuse Iraqi detainees were beaten with car aerials and wooden sticks; were humiliated by being placed in a net and carried round in a forklift truck; and forced to strip naked and participate in sexually humiliating and abusive acts (including being forced to simulate anal and oral sex with one another)[103]. These abuses were photographed by a number of soldiers (Leigh Day & Co Solicitors 2008)[104]. That same year, Baha Mousa, a 26-year-old receptionist at Basra's Ibn al-Haitham Hotel, was taken into custody by British troops during a 'routine investigation' and sustained 93 separate injuries, including fractured ribs and a broken nose. He would die as a result of the injuries meted out by members of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment.

While members of the military establishment were keen to dismiss the abuses, appealing for them to be viewed in terms of the "very small number of cases"[105], or the result of "serious failings in army leadership, planning and training" (Balakrishnan 2008), both anecdotal evidence and the number of formal military investigations into abuses more generally suggest that there is in fact more than a 'very small number'. For example, the 2008 *Aitken Report* into cases of deliberate and unlawful killing in Iraq by British troops between 2003 and 2004 documents six separate incidents including accusations of murder perpetrated by British soldiers and the beating up of Iraqi youths during the Al Amarah riot in 2004, as well as the Camp Breadbasket abuses and Mousa case. Further, according to a

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[102] While I share Melanie Richter-Montpetit's (2007) discomfort in the linguistic belittling of the severity of these practices through the use of the term 'abuse' as opposed to 'torture' (Richter-Montpetit writes about the Abu Ghraib 'scandal' perpetrated by American military police officers), I do deploy it in this article. I do so in a moral move. It is my belief that we should resist ideas of 'abuse' not being as 'bad' as 'torture'. Rather, we should be appalled by what takes place regardless of what it is termed or labelled.
[103] There have also been claims of sexual assault by those held at Camp Breadbasket. Some of these claims made by Iraqi detainees have since been settled out of court by the MoD, with the MoD now declining to comment on them (see http://www.claims.co.uk/news/mod-face-payouts-abuse.html, accessed on 7 Nov 2011).
[104] It was the photographs that brought the abuse to the attention of the public. One of the perpetrators, Fusilier Gary Bartlam, took his photographs to be developed and sparked the inquiry into the abuse.
[105] Taken from General Sir Michael Jackson's (the UK's most senior soldier at the time), statement at the sentencing of soldiers charged with the Camp Breadbasket abuses.

Guardian investigation in March 2012, the Royal Military Police (RMP) "have started at least 126 investigations into incidents in which British troops are alleged to have killed or injured Afghan civilians". Around 90 Afghan civilians, including women and children, have been killed or wounded since January 2005. The actual number of casualties is likely to be far higher as the MoD has kept secret the details of many of the incidents. Those that have been documented include: the stabbing of a ten year old boy with a bayonet in the kidneys; shooting and killing a 65-year-old man who was praying in a field; and beating an Afghan male unconscious while questioning him (Evans 2012). In their report *The Guardian* states that

> [t]his is only a very partial picture. The MoD has censored many details of the incidents, citing the usual reasons such as the need to protect national security. We have no way of course of knowing whether those reasons are valid or merely to avoid embarrassment (*ibid*).

The 'partial picture' that *The Guardian's* report points to is supported by 'whistleblowers' who have spoken out against, what they perceive as, the illegitimate violence and abuse the local populations of Iraq and Afghanistan have been subjected to. Speaking to the BBC in 2009, a senior member of the RMP said during his time in the Special Investigation Branch – responsible for investigating alleged war crimes in Iraq – he suspected that he was "serving in something that was party to covering up quite serious allegations of torture and murder" (BBC 2009). Louise Thomas, an official working with the Iraq Historic Allegations Team, which was set up in response to a growing number of complaints from former prisoners, resigned after claiming it, had become "little more than a whitewash". Thomas claims to have seen a number of videos of interrogation sessions "which showed prisoners being abused, humiliated and threatened", including detainees being threatened with rape during the interrogation, and being told they were going to be hanged and given a detailed description of the mechanics of hanging (Cobain 2012). While this is not to suggest that all military personnel engage in, or knows of, such abuse, it is worth keeping in mind when senior members of the military establishment make claims to the 'very small number of cases'. The military, more so than other public institutions, is very insular and largely self-regulating. Cases of abuse that are not considered too serious by unit commanders are tried not in public court martials, but behind closed doors in what are known as 'summary hearings'. According to Nick Harvey, the UK's armed forces minister, results of summary hearings are not disclosed publicly so to protect the privacy of the soldiers (Evans et al. 2012). Cases of abuse that are dealt with in such a way are likely

therefore to receive little, if any, public attention (and even then, these are only the cases that not only reach senior commanders, but are chosen to be acted upon). It is then, not too far of a stretch to claim that it is likely that there are numerous cases of abuse – in all its severities – perpetrated by British troops that the public simply do not hear about.

Whether these cases are pervasive throughout the military or are localised to 'just' those that have been confirmed, it remains that they do not sit comfortably alongside dominant renderings of a benevolent 'liberal warrior'. Given, as my last chapter discussed, that the British military has undergone a shift from an institution primarily concerned with war fighting, to one that is now intimately connected with nation building, allows openly gay individuals to serve, and posits discipline and restraint as central to the actions of its soldiers, how can soldiers produced in and through these seemingly benign values engage in such homophobic and illegitimate practices of violence? How can the very bodies of the populations liberal warriors are supposed to be protecting become the site of their violent re/enactments?

Understanding the abuses at Camp Breadbasket and the murder of Baha Mousa as 'ghosts' – the concrete materialisation (and in the case of Mousa, the embodiment) of hauntings of homosexual potential, uncontrollability, and colonial desires and fears – and supported by the above evidence of more widespread violence, this chapter will claim that such violences can be understood as part of a continuum[106] of the performative enactments of basic training used to uphold borders marked by the myths of asexuality and discipline. As my previous chapter demonstrated, even within the highly regulated frame of basic training a newly constructed liberal warrior is rendered precarious through its embodiment by messy, unpredictable, human recruits. Borders marked by the myths of asexuality and discipline are not fixed and hard, but soft, 'ghostly' and porous. When already-fragile soldiering subjects move from training centres in the UK to operational bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, and encounter bodies marked as 'Other' along racial, cultural and religious lines, colonial logics imbued within a liberal warrior intersect with the performative enactments of the myths, marking the bodies of the local population as the site of the violent return, and concrete materialisation, of colonial, (homo)sexualised and undisciplined hauntings.

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[106] My use of the term 'continuum' here is intended to point to the ways in which these violences should not be viewed as distinct or 'stand alone' from one another, but intimately connected and implicated with and within one another. I do not intend my use of the term to suggest a linearity or inevitability of the violences. Melanie Richter-Montpetit also uses the phrase a "continuum of violence" (2007: 40) in her discussion of the prison 'abuses' at Abu Ghraib.

The first half of this chapter explores Britain's colonial past, and the ways in which particular gendered, sexualised and raced discourses continue to haunt a contemporary liberal warrior. While the brutality and cruelty of the British Empire is at least now broadly recognised, and official rhetoric revolves round themes such as 'partnership' and 'cultural understanding', its spectral presence can still be felt. Central to this is the continuation, and understanding of, the 'civilising mission' that was so central to the British Empire. This is coupled with a framing of a liberal warrior as both innocent and vulnerable when positioned in opposition to the irrational, barbaric and duplicitous locals. The second half of this chapter returns to the violences described above, treating them as 'ghosts' that give notice to both the (im)possibility of the myths of asexuality and discipline, and the haunting spectres of gendered, raced and sexualised colonial logics, while simultaneously operating to (re)inscribe and (re)articulate the borders of a militarised masculine liberal warrior.

COLONIAL LOGICS OF A LIBERAL WARRIOR

While contemporary constructions of a liberal warrior have emerged in response to, and through the discourses and practices of, counterinsurgency warfare, it is also a subject position that has evolved in and through an understanding of Britain's history as a colonial power, and British men as colonial soldiers, rulers and explorers. Britain – or perhaps more accurately, England, given the brutal repression and ruling of Scotland, Wales and until recently, Northern Ireland[107] – can be considered the colonial power *par excellence.* At its height, the British Empire was the largest of the European empires, adding over 10 million square miles and 400 million people to its colonial holdings over the course of the nineteenth century (Levine 2007: 82). In its totality the British Empire encompassed nearly 13 million square miles of land – roughly a quarter of the world's total landmass. Queen Victoria, who reigned over Britain's most expansive empire, presided over some 445 million subjects around the globe (Elkins 2005: 5). For the British however, imperialism was not solely about exploitation.

> Though disparate, Britain's far-flung empire was united by a single imperial ethos, the 'civilizing mission'…in fact, if one believed the official rhetoric of the time, exploitation was hardly a factor at all in motivating Britain's global conquests. With their superior race, Christian values, and economic know-how, the British instead had a duty, a moral obligation, to redeem the 'backward heathens' of the world (*ibid.*: 5).

[107] As Philippa Levine states, "it is all too easy to forget that the United Kingdom was a product of Britain's larger colonial enterprise, and never a 'natural' connection between the quite different groups that, as the Empire was consolidated, were [brutally] brought together as Great Britain" (2007: 12).

According to their own line of reasoning, the British were not stealing land or exploiting local labour, "but were instead self-appointed trustees for the hapless 'natives' who had not yet reached a point on the evolutionary scale to develop or make responsible decisions on their own" (*ibid.*: 5). In the words of Rudyard Kipling's poem, the empire was there to take up the 'White Man's Burden', to guide and, at times, (violently) assist those from 'backward heathens' into modernity.

> [T]he zeal for social reform already so fashionable in Britain was imported to address the alleged savageries of local culture. Alongside reforming politicians, scores of lobbyists demanded reform in a wide range of activities from customs regarding dress to the treatment of newborn children, from sexual mores to religious rituals. Missionaries, feminists, humanitarians, doctors, teachers and a host of others called on colonial governments to end what they saw as barbaric practices and to encourage Christian and western behaviours. This was the 'civilizational' model of imperialism, the common and popular argument that allegedly backward peoples were well served by good colonial administration that would educate and Christianize them, help them curb disease and poverty… These were powerful and deeply felt arguments and many people genuinely believed in the good they felt colonial rule could do in improving 'backward' and difficult lives (Levine 2007: 100).

For this empire to be considered a civilising project, and the men[108] who enacted it to be embodied by the "image of a lone, dashing Englishman dispensing justice, wisdom and righteous retribution upon his brown subjects" (Rutherford 1997: 13), particular gendered, raced and sexualised discourses were both relied upon and (re)enacted. Discourses that enabled specific understandings of the white, Western Self and non-white, colonised Other. Before even reaching the far-off lands Britain would later colonise, "[k]nowledge of the unknown world was mapped as a metaphysics of gender violence… In these fantasies, the world is feminized and spatially spread for male exploration" (McClintock 1995: 23). Colonised lands were understood as empty – 'virgin lands' – prior to colonisation, "passively awaiting the thrusting, male insemination of history, language and reason" (*ibid.*: 30). Indigenous people who populate such lands were dealt with by being symbolically displaced by what Anne McClintock terms "*anachronistic space*". "According to this trope, colonized people…do not inhabit history proper but exist as anachronistic humans, atavistic, irrational, bereft of human agency – the living embodiment of the archaic 'primitive'" (*ibid.*: 30,

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[108] While the architects and enforcers of empire were predominantly men, white European women were not merely the "hapless onlookers of empire" (McClintock 1995: 6). Rather, "the rationed privileges of race all too often put white women in positions of decided – if borrowed – power, not only over colonized women but also over colonized men. As such, white women…were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting" (*ibid.*: 6).

emphasis in original). Colonial discourses such as these ensured a double disavowal: the disavowal of both female agency and that of the colonised (*ibid.*: 30).

The metaphorical marking of colonised lands as feminine and sexualised is reinforced by a long tradition of male explorers embarking upon "male travel as an erotics of ravishment" (*ibid.*: 22).

> For centuries, the uncertain continents…were figured in European lore as libidinously eroticized…so that, long before the era of high Victorian imperialism, Africa and the Americas had become what can be called a porno-tropics for the European imagination…onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears (*ibid.*: 22).

The Arabic-Orient, as one Europe's "deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (Said 1979:1), was constituted as a site of particular sexual excess, with Europe's forbidden sexual transgressions projected upon the Oriental man. A man who was contradictorily and inconsistently portrayed as effeminised and/or homosexual[109] or as a lusty villain "from whom the virile but courteous European could rescue the native (or the European) woman" (Loomba 1998: 152). As both the colonised lands and people were marked by a monstrous sexuality, the colonising powers and colonising men could position themselves in opposition: as sexually restrained and honourable saviours. Indeed, the so-called barbarity of native men became a major justification for imperial rule. Gayatri Spivak distils this colonial dynamic into a single sentence: "White men are saving brown women from brown men" (cited in Loomba 1998: 154). According to Helen Carr, "in the language of colonialism, non-Europeans occupy the same symbolic space as women. Both are seen as part of nature, not culture, and with the same ambivalence" (cited in Loomba 1998: 159). Ambivalence meaning that like the colonised land, colonised people were to be both feared for their irrational and dangerous ways, and governed because of their passivity and innocence.

Colonial discourses were never then, 'just' racial discourses. While today skin colour has become the prime signifier of racial identities, the latter is – and has always been – "shaped by perceptions of religious, ethnic, linguistic, national, sexual and class differences. 'Race' as a concept receives its meanings contextually, and in relation to other social groupings and hierarchies" (Loomba 1998: 121-2). The British Empire then, and men's understanding of who they were within it was supported by interlocking discourses of difference. I use the term 'interlocking' here following Sherene Razack. Razack argues that the term 'intersecting' implies discrete systems whose paths cross. Inter*locking* systems

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[109] William Lithgow who travelled through Turkey in the seventeenth century described the men as "addicted, besides all their sensual and incestuous lusts, to Sodomy, which they account as a dainty to digest all their other libidinous pleasures (cited in Loomba 1998: 155).

however, *are* each other and give content and form to one other. In Razack's words: "An interlocking approach requires that we keep several balls in the air at once, striving to overcome the successive process forced upon us by language and focusing on the ways in which bodies express social hierarchies of power" (2008: 62-3). What Razack means by this is that while one such system or discourse may provide an entry point for discussion – for example, that Oriental men are more prone to homosexuality – it is immediately evident that such an understanding is both reinforced by, and reinforces, understandings of the Oriental man as more effeminate; as colonised lands harbouring monstrous or deviant sexualities; of the white, European man as the embodiment of masculinity and a restrained, but virile, sexuality; and all of these understandings underwritten and interlocking with racial identity.

The British Empire however, was not only produced and sustained by gendered, raced and sexualised discourses. From its outset violence was integral to its operation. A system of deep inequality was entrenched between the coloniser and colonised. For the vast majority of those affected by British colonial rule "[t]heir lands were appropriated, their access to employment limited and prescribed, their movement often restricted, and their communities redefined and sometimes literally moved from their locations" (Levine 2007: 141). Colonial employers in Africa could, and did, use floggings and beatings to discipline their workforce (a practice that only begun to decline in East Africa after the 1940s) (*ibid*.: 129); agricultural taxation in India imposed by the British Crown intensified crop failures and famines with more than six million dying from famine in the 1870s, and another five million in the late 1890s (*ibid*.: 136); and this is to say nothing of Britain's central role in the slave trade that shipped some twelve million Africans to the Americas between the mid-fifteenth and late nineteenth century (*ibid*.: 15). Patrick Porter refers to claims that the final campaigns of British Empire were implemented "with a 'minimum force' philosophy and unequalled levels of cultural insight" as a "Liberal Lie" (2009: 59). Campaigns such as Malaya and Kenya were not culturally sensitive:

> Against the Kikuyu ('Mau-Mau') in Kenya, Britain employed interrogation under torture, hangings, indiscriminate bombings of forest, and white settlers or local proxies applied sadistic violence, dismemberment, and killings in custody. In Malaya, there were detentions without trial, executions, jungle bombing campaigns, and forcible resettlement of the population into camps… If these campaigns succeeded, it was not because they were discriminate and enlightened (*ibid*.: 59).

While the rhetoric of the time was "that colonialism was a beneficiant force, an exercise in enlightened development allowing the entire world to enjoy the benefits of western living, the reality was often one of limitation, constraint and oppression" (Levine 2007: 141).

While today the violence and brutality of the British Empire and imperialism is widely recognised[110], as numerous theorists drawing on postcolonialism have pointed to, colonial logics that circulated and operated during the era of empire can be traced in contemporary interventions by the West in the post-colonies and so-called 'Orient' (be they 'humanitarian' missions or wars of aggression)[111]. It is these colonial logics that are imbued within constructions of a liberal warrior. It is not my claim that there has been a simple continuation, rather, I claim what is visible – through the materialisation of *ghosts* – are hauntings of colonial desires and fears, and violent logics that underwrote the era of empire. Such hauntings do not have the crudeness of the discourses at play during the empire, however, nor are they completely disconnected from one another. Ghostly materialisations of these hauntings can be found in the language used to describe British military involvement, in the 'cultural turn' in operations, and in understandings of what soldiers think they're doing and who they think they are.

Central to today's conception of a liberal warrior is the notion of innocence, an unhinging of the subject from its nation's colonial and imperialistic history. Unlike the brutality of the British Empire, contemporary interventions in the 'Orient' are in "partnership" with local security forces; are "shaped by the will of the Afghan [or other local population] people"; and are not about "imposing a Western model" of how society should be structured (MoD n.d.e). There is then an explicit disavowal of colonial practices and a recasting of the white, Western subject as innocent. In her discussion of European travel and exploration writers in colonial times, Mary Louise Pratt uses the term "anti-conquest" to describe the strategies of representation deployed by European bourgeois subjects to secure their innocence in the same moment they assert European hegemony. Pratt claims that in travel and exploration writings anti-conquest is a strategy of innocence constituted in relation to the older imperial rhetoric of conquest (1992: 7). Just as Pratt's travel writers and

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[110] There remain however, a notable number of apologists for the British Empire and imperialism more widely. While Niall Ferguson is perhaps the most prominent of these, the historian Lawrence James describes the British Empire as "a dynamic force for the regeneration of the world. It brought peace, security and stability to people who had lacked them; it delivered the products of science and technology to vast tracts of the world; and showed their inhabitants how they could master their environment" (James 2012). While Andrew Roberts claims the concentration camps (indeed, the first concentration camps ever created) set up the British during the Boer war were done so out of concern for "human rights", despite the 34,000 deaths they led to (Hari 2009).

[111] By no means an exhaustive list but for examples please see: Anne Orford (1999); Derek Gregory (2004); Sherene Razack (2004); and Ann Russo (2006).

explorers define and establish themselves in opposition to the imperialists and colonialists of their times, constructing their role and their self-identity as innocent, I claim that today's counterinsurgency soldiers utilise similar strategies of representation.

Leo Docherty, a captain in the British Army, describes in his memoir of his time in Helmand, Afghanistan, his excitement and enthusiasm for taking part in something as "honourable" as nation building (2007: 45). Docherty envisions himself as a "latter-day Great-Gamer" (*ibid.*: 44) [112], "serving NATO, not the Empire", and is confident the British "won't make such foolish errors this time around" (*ibid.*: 48). Unlike the British who went into Afghanistan centuries before him, Docherty believes the "ideal opportunity to play a new version of the Great Game has presented itself" (*ibid.*: 45). He imagines himself "speaking Pashtu and cutting deals with Pashtun tribal elders while drinking tea in the Hindu Kush" (*ibid.*: 45), and being "at the epicentre of something so huge, important, maybe even historic" (*ibid.*: 55). There is much in Docherty's memoir that can draw comparisons with Pratt's 'anti-conquest man'. Docherty pointedly separates himself from the institution of the British Army as a whole, with his memoir opening with Docherty being summoned to a disciplinary meeting with a Major General after he was openly critical of British strategy in Afghanistan in a national newspaper. This in and of itself is unusual for a book in the 'TiC-lit' (troops in combat) genre, with the vast majority opening with an 'action' sequence on the front line. Much of Docherty's focus however, is concerned with strategy surrounding 'nation building' and his disappointment with its failure to materialise[113]. Most importantly, Docherty continually positions himself – and at least certain sections of the British Army[114] – as innocent in his writing. The laziness of the Afghan National Army (ANA), the "duplicitous nature of Afghan politics" (*ibid.*: 148), and the failure of other partners in the 'Comprehensive Approach' (the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development) to enact reconstruction projects, have let Afghanistan – not to

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[112] Foreign intervention in Afghanistan from the nineteenth century onwards has been colloquially referred to as 'The Great Game'. The term was first taken from a letter written by a British Officer, Captain Arthur Connolly, who served in Afghanistan and India from 1823-42. Connolly wrote about his hopes for a "great game", even a "noble game", to be played out in these lands (Gregory 2004: 30).

[113] It is interesting to note however, that a discussion of Docherty's book on militaryforums.co.uk is largely critical of his stance. Those contributing to the posts refer to him as a "hippie" who was naïve to think Afghans were anything other than "lazy as f@#k", and are scathing of both his failure to see any "real action" and his decision to speak to the media (MilitaryForums, *Desert of Death – Leo Docherty*). (With thanks to Claire Duncanson whose paper at the International Studies Association Conference in 2012, San Diego, drew my attention to this forum.)

[114] Like a lot of those attached to the infantry ranks Docherty values the hardships and difficulty of infantry experience over those of other ranks. Referring to the international staff officers based in Bastion Docherty describes them as "bloated and ineffectual" (2007: 58); Steven McLaughlin writes about the level of drunkenness amongst military personnel outside the infantry, noting "there is the infantry, and then there is everything else" (2007: 186); and Colonel Stuart Tootal deploys the common military slang of "REMF" – rear echelon mother fucker (2009: 128).

mention Docherty's visions of a latter-day Great Game – down. Furthermore, despite Docherty's frequent references to 'The Great Game', Britain is not implicated in the bloody history of the region nor the long shadow British imperialism has cast. Despite his attempts at distancing himself from the British Army as a whole and his critique of British policy in Afghanistan, Docherty rearticulates much of the official rhetoric, situating Britain as a benevolent force in the region, looking only to improve the lives of Afghans.

Docherty's ability to imagine himself as a latter day 'Great-Gamer' while simultaneously ignoring the violence and brutality of Britain's involvement in the original Great Game can be viewed as deriving from his performance of, what Razack calls, "national and international mythologies" – the "myths and the stories that nations and regions tell about their origins and history" (2004: 8). Razack's myths can be understood as 'poststructuralised' Barthes' myths introduced in my previous chapter. For Razack, "[t]he hold that mythologies have should not be underestimated… Mythologies help the nation to forget its bloody past and present" (*ibid.*: 9). Just as in colonial times when Britain believed itself to not solely be an imperial exploiting power, but a benign authority who was assisting less capable nations to modernise according to European societal norms and values, today, myths surrounding Britain and its interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan invite people within Britain to view themselves as citizens of a compassionate and civilised nation. In constructing these contemporary myths what histories have been emptied out? In what ways do they operate to purify the actions of those enacting them, to make them innocent, to give them a natural and eternal justification (Barthes 2009: 169-70)? In short, national and international mythologies obscure, or make *un*-visible, haunting colonial violences and desires inherent in Britain's contemporary forays abroad. When the MoD states that Afghanistan remains "not yet ready to secure itself" (MoD n.d.e) and our national media continually rearticulates the mantra of "Afghanistan's traditional weaknesses of warlordism and ethnic strife" (*The Week*, 4 Aug 2012), Britain's own complicity and history of colonialism in the region is papered over. Like the colonial logics at play during the nineteenth century, these myths ensure the dominant stories told are those of dangerous, irrational and primitive societies outside 'The West', and of citizens of nations who join in alliance to promote their values of democracy and peace (Razack 2004: 16). Rendered *un*-visible in these stories are the details that "historically, the internal and external civilizing missions of 'the New World' (and the 'Old Europe') were based on systematic violence against Other(s)" (Richter-Montpetit 2007: 43). Therefore,

> [w]hen New World Order mythologies refer to the obligation of the First World…to teach the Third World about democracy, the underlying logic is the same as nineteenth-century colonialism and imperialism's notion of a civilizing mission… Empire is…a deeply held belief in the need and the right to dominate others *for their own good* (Razack 2004: 9-10, emphasis in original).

Individuals like Docherty come to understand themselves through these scripts, these myths, "believing deeply in 'the illusion of benevolence'" (*ibid.*: 10). While some inhabit this frame as confident colonisers, others, like Docherty, "simply begin unself-consciously as people who have set out to 'do good'" (*ibid.*: 58). While moments of self-reflection and critique may take place during a tour of duty or in a soldier's later recollections of it[115], the strength of the interlocking discourses, and a liberal warrior's entanglement within them, mean that a racial hierarchy is installed. A racial hierarchy with the concomitant colonial alignment of a white, Western Self with civility, agency and superiority, and a non-white, colonised 'Other' with primitivism, barbarism and inferiority.

A VULNERABLE LIBERAL WARRIOR

A simultaneous move in recasting the white, Western subject from violent coloniser to innocent nation-builder has been the marking of both whiteness and bodies in white armies[116] as vulnerable (Thobani 2007: 169-70). Soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan talk of needing to be "wary" and "watchful" of a "resourceful and cunning" local population (McLaughlin 2007: 148), and of feeling "vulnerable" (*ibid.*: 154). As both the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan quickly descended into counterinsurgency warfare, muscular peacekeeping and peacebuilding skills were required as much as conventional war fighting tactics. The shift away from war fighting and towards peacekeeping/building however, has not signalled an attendant decrease in the risk seemingly perceived by the public, military and soldiers themselves. Reflecting on his time as an infantry soldier in Iraq, Steven McLaughlin, views peacekeeping in a "hostile region" as posing potentially "even greater dangers" than "all-out

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[115] For example, at one point Docherty struggles with what he refers to as his "disappointing double-sided existence": his simultaneous and contradictory desire "to be properly 'embedded' with the Afghans", while annoyed with himself for his "enjoyment of the Afghan-free DFAC [dining facility]" (Docherty 2007: 88). Hennessey too wonders if his instinctive first reaction to the ANA – "at best mistrust and at worst revulsion" – was a form of racism: "an inability to understand the different and a lazy reluctance to engage with the unfamiliar" (2012: 253).

[116] While individual soldiers may be brown or black (this is particularly the case in the lower ranks, demonstrating the interlocking of class and race), they remain regulated by the civilising mission they are undertaking (Razack 2004: 55); a civilising mission that pitches myths of whiteness in opposition to myths of non-whiteness.

war". For McLaughlin, while "in wartime you could blast away at the enemy whenever you saw them…as peacekeepers we would have to adhere to strict rules of engagement and have eyes in the back of our heads" (*ibid.*: 139). In today's counterinsurgency warfare soldiers' vulnerability does not come from an enemy's superior fighting force and ability, rather, it comes from a combination of the enemy's 'duplicitous nature', a local population who cannot be trusted, and the honourable intentions of the 'civilising mission' British liberal warriors are taking part in. Not only are enemies difficult to spot – they "weren't uniformed soldiers driving tanks but smiling terrorists wearing jeans and trainers" (*ibid.*: 139) – but the local population, the very people who British soldiers are there to protect, assist terrorists in ambushing the occupying forces. Speaking of the Taliban, Lieutenant Toby Glover says, "One minute they will be walking down the street and have a woman and children surrounding them and the next the woman and children will disappear and he will be firing at you" (Gillan 2006). It is not however, only the tenacity of enemy forces that renders British soldiers vulnerable. Counterinsurgency warfare and winning the 'hearts and minds' of the local population means immediate recourse to heavy firepower is no longer "a strategic goal in its own right" (Aylwin-Foster 2005: 5). Instead, troops are expected to "go through a ritual of checks and balances" before they could pull the trigger – "by which time you would have probably flirted with death anyway" (McLaughlin 2007: 149). While such careful 'rules of engagement' have led to criticisms from British troops complaining their effectiveness as soldiers is being compromised, and by American allies who claim the British are "too reluctant to fire" (Aylwin-Foster 2005: 5), the rules have also been held up as evidence of Britain's 'anti-conquest' stance. While the "brute force" of the Americans[117] has positioned them as "aggressive invaders", the UK's more conservative rules of engagement, and their "diplomacy, tact, [and] consideration" is central to their embodiment as liberal warriors and "helpful peacekeeper[s]" (McLaughlin 2007: 226)[118].

This representation of British militarised masculinity as both vulnerable and honourable renders visible the seeming irrationality and violence of a non-Western 'Other', and through this framing haunting colonial logics are revealed. British soldiers are understood as taking part in a noble venture (albeit one they are not always capable of

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[117] While British soldiers deploying to Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein were told to operate under the "White Card" system, "based on the idea of a slowly escalating conflict that builds to lethal force", American troops "remained on 'war fighting' rules of engagement, which meant that if they felt at all threatened they could apply firepower". McLaughlin claims that while American troops, unlike their British counterparts, could fight their way out of a threatening situation without facing a possible jail sentence, "nervous and trigger-happy [American] soldiers could cause mayhem on the streets" (2007: 149-50).

[118] The innocence and vulnerability that is associated with this restrained and 'honest' form of warfare, and what violences it makes possible, will be detailed in my next chapter.

enacting due to failures behind the front line), of holding back kinetic force in service of 'winning hearts and minds' (even when there is potential danger to themselves), and completely disassociated with Britain's colonial past. They are liberal warriors carrying out a liberal project. In contrast, the enemy is devious, using women and children as shields; the enemy is cowardly deploying improvised explosive devices (IEDs)[119] as their weapon of choice; and the enemy is irrational, fighting a 'holy war' rather than fighting for state objectives and in name of democracy and Western liberal values. This contrast – a "'Manichean allegory', in which a binary and implacable discursive opposition between races is produced" (Loomba 1998: 104) – is compounded by a suspicious and untrustworthy local population. A population described by the title of one of Docherty's chapters: "As far as I can tell you, they're on our side" (2007: 133). Here, familiar tropes of the Orient and Oriental man circulate; tropes that are informed by, and rearticulate, familiar colonial discourses. In his analysis of Lord Cromer's[120] 1908 two-volume work, *Modern Egypt*, Edward Said states that 'Orientals' are depicted as "inveterate liars, they are 'lethargic and suspicious', and in everything oppose the clarity, directness and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race" (Said 1979: 39).

While I am not claiming that there has been a simple continuation in either colonial practice or discourse – British officials now engage in shuras with the local population, legislatures are elected by a franchised population, and rhetoric is dominated by discussions of partnership and power transfer – there remains the haunting presence of colonial logics. Logics that are gendered, raced and sexualised in very specific ways. In the latter half of this chapter I want to revisit the two episodes of violence detailed at the start. Understanding these violences as two materialisations of ghosts, I want to trace the ways in which the hauntings that are given notice to expose the precariousness of a liberal warrior and its myths of asexuality and discipline. And in this moment of fragility and rupture, how the bodies of the populations British soldiers were sent to protect come to be marked as sites for a liberal warrior's violent (re)iteration.

THE ABUSES AT CAMP BREADBASKET

To return then to the practices of 'routine', 'non-sexual' nakedness during training – showering together, photographs of recruits' own nudity and that of their friends adorning their rooms, 'Naked Bar' – in these homosocial contexts, nakedness constitutes unity,

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[119] The enemy's use of IEDs will be unpacked in greater detail in my next chapter.
[120] Lord Cromer was British consul general in Egypt from 1883 to 1907.

bonding and fraternity between recruits. As a persistent feature of military life, group nudity is just another body practice that works to produce a militarised masculine identity. Homophobia operates as a boundary-marking device, severing any relation between the homosociability of this nakedness and the potential (homo)sexuality of male group nakedness. Such boundary-marking exorcises the haunting (homo)sexual aspects of nakedness. However, as the first paragraph of this chapter detailing the abuses carried out by British soldiers at Camp Breadbasket signifies, group nakedness does not always work to produce a bonded team of liberal warriors[121]. Moreover, if the naked bodies are simultaneously marked and 'Othered' by interlocking discourses of race, gender and sexuality, group nakedness can actually operate to *undo* particular subjects' masculinity.

In the enforced nakedness at Camp Breadbasket we see the "unhappy echo" (Woodward and Winter 2007: 74) of soldiers' own routine and non-sexual nudity, and the materialisation of a ghost indicating hauntings rendered *un*-visible – hauntings of (homo)sexualised transgressions and colonial desires and fears. Unlike recruit nakedness during basic training or on a camp base during a tour of duty[122], the nakedness that took place in Camp Breadbasket did not signify togetherness, bonding and asexuality. Instead, nakedness took place in and through interlocking gendered, raced and sexualised discourses, marking the bodies of Iraqi detainees forced into it as 'Other' and (homo)sexualised. The haunting (homo)sexuality, exorcised from a militarised masculine liberal warrior through the marking of a boundary between (homo)sexual male behaviour and non-sexual male behaviour, has then not been expelled from the enactments of nudity at Camp Breadbasket. Rather, as a ghost, the abuses – particularly the sexual abuses – work to reveal the haunting spectres of (homo)sexualised transgressions and colonial logics. Ghosts, as my methodology chapter states, give notice to that which haunts. They reveal that what has been rendered *un*-visible is in fact a "seething presence" (Gordon 2008: 8). To 'respect' hauntings signified by ghosts, to refuse the temptation to 'ghost' them all over again, is to pay attention to the

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[121] Nor does male group nudity exclusively occur within the military in the production of masculinities. In a number of traditionally 'macho' environments (the all-male competitive sports team for example) male group nakedness is also a routine, 'everyday' body practice.

[122] As already noted, there are numerous references to time spent sunbathing and an accompanying photograph of the "original Junior Officers' Reading Club" (Hennessey 2009: 142) in various states of undress in Hennessey's memoir. Woodward and Winter refer also to the 'Is this the way to Amarillo' video spoof made by British infantry troops in 2006 while stationed in Iraq (the video can be found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ld1DTmXesTo, accessed on 13 Aug 2012). Soldiers are filmed in varying stages of nudity throughout the film (Woodward and Winter 2007: 74), while the central character of the video, who is flanked throughout by men on either side of him, is credited with the name 'Lucky Pierre'. 'Lucky Pierre' is a sexual reference to the middle-man, being anally penetrated, in a three-person sexual encounter.

specific ways in which they (sometimes violently) materialise, and what this can reveal about the discourses and 'things' that have been concealed.

That the acts of violence and humiliation at Camp Breadbasket followed an aggressively homophobic script, with nudity and simulated homosexual sex enforced upon the detainees, can begin to be unpacked and made sense of if we understand them as part of a continuum of the heteronormative performative enactments of basic training. These enactments, used during basic training to uphold the myth of asexuality, in this context interlock with haunting gendered, raced and sexualised colonial logics. Building on the work of Sherene Razack (2004; 2008) and Melanie Richter-Montpetit (2007), such violences can be understood as grounded in colonial desires and fears, and an extension of colonial violences that reach back in time to the modern 'civilising mission'. As Richter-Montpetit states, "From the 'discoveries' of the Middle Ages on, the racialized sexualization of colonial conquests played a central role in western imperialisms in terms of constructing boundaries along the intersecting lines of class[123], gender, race, nation and civilization" (2007: 46). As discussed above, central to the colonial project was the feminising of both the colonised lands ('virgin lands', "feminized and spatially spread for male exploration" [McClintock 1995: 23]) and populations, especially the men. It is these gendered and sexualised colonial discourses that we can see being played out – these hauntings being revealed – in the enforced nakedness and sexual abuse that took place at Camp Breadbasket.

In being forced to strip naked and simulate anal and oral sex with one another – the very homoerotic and hypersexualised practices British troops willingly engage in throughout their time in the military – Iraqi detainees experience disciplinary techniques according to what Timothy Kaufman-Osborn calls a "logic of emasculation". According to this logic, the aim of the techniques "is to strip prisoners of their masculine gender identity and turn them into caricatures of terrified and often infantilized femininity" (2005: 606). Integral to this emasculation and feminisation of the detainees is the symbolic role of penetration. While the sexual abuse that took place at Camp Breadbasket consisted of simulated as opposed to actual anal and oral sex[124], to violate a man in this manner remains one of the most potent ways of asserting power of one group of men over another (Razack 2004: 71). "In almost every cultural and institutional context imaginable, penetration is associated with masculinity

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[123] While the interlocking nature of discourses means that no one discourse can be separated from the others, a classed discourse is not explored in any great detail in this chapter. However, class should be considered as always already constituted by, and constitutive of, the discourses of gender, race and sexuality I do trace. For example, white, middle-class, English masculinity was inextricably tied to imperial projects during the nineteenth and early twentieth century and remains so today (Razack 2004: 62).
[124] However, as footnote 103 states, there have in fact been accusations of 'actual' sexual assault, including forcing a fourteen-year-old Iraqi boy to perform oral sex on another Iraqi male (Johnson 2008).

and dominance while penetrability is a marker of subordination." (Belkin 2012: 83) Citing Alan Dundes, Belkin states, "Answering the question of who penetrates whom is a pretty standard means of testing masculinity cross-culturally", and nowhere "has this been more true than in the military" (*ibid*.: 83). In the sexual abuses at Camp Breadbasket, British soldiers assume the position of symbolic penetrator through their role as the enforcer of simulated (and potentially actual) oral and anal sex. Through this role British soldiers enact dominance, control, masculinity – characteristics central to the construction of a militarised masculine liberal warrior. In comparison, Iraqi detainees subjected to this abuse experience a dismantling of "the qualities conventionally associated with masculinity and replacing them with a hyperbolic incarnation of the qualities stereotypically associated with femininity: obedience, passivity, depression, anxiety, and shame" (Kaufman-Osborn 2005: 608).

British soldiers are however, positioned as double penetrators, for it is not only over the bodies of the Iraqi detainees that they have power of penetration. As in colonial times, the Iraqi nation and land itself has been painted as feminine and passive, awaiting masculine penetration and action. As the invasion of Iraq by British and American forces in 2003 marked Iraqi men – who, by traditional stories of war and nationalism, should have been protecting their nation – as weak and feminine, the subordination and humiliation of Iraqi men in Camp Breadbasket works to paint the Iraqi nation as passive and vulnerable. This co-constitutive relationship between nation and manhood simultaneously works to rearticulate and re-inscribe the invading armies and perpetrators of abuse as dominant, strong and, above all, masculine.

Penetration however, does not only signify subordination and femininity[125], the act of penetration is also fundamental to homosexuality (Belkin 2012: 97), specifically male homosexuality (think back to the stereotyping of the hyper-sexed, predatory gay soldier discussed in the previous chapter; the suggestion being that a homosexual male cannot simply be around other men without experiencing a desperate desire for penetration). Here we can begin to see the ways in which gendered, raced and sexualised discourses of difference interlock with one another. The abuses at Camp Breadbasket forced detainees to assume demeaning and sexualised positions. The positions stripped masculinity and imposed

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[125] In his discussion of American military masculinity Aaron Belkin (2012) unpacks the ways in which the act of penetration cannot simply be viewed as passive and feminine in American military culture. Belkin makes the claim that the penetrator/penetrated and masculine/feminine binarisms that are elided are more complicated than their simple oppositions suggest. In his research Belkin explores times when penetration has actually come to signify masculinity (for example, the ability to 'take it like a man'), and it is this contradiction that helps to ensure conformity and obedience amongst troops. Likewise, as my previous chapter demonstrated, symbolic penetration through male group nudity and homoerotic play (such as simulated anal sex) works to (re)inscribe participants' masculinity.

femininity on the participants through the enactment of a stylised power imbalance with British soldiers in the (masculine) dominant and active role, and the Iraqi detainees in the (feminine) submissive and passive role (Zurbriggen 2008: 307). However, as an implicitly homosexualised practice, and enacted according to an aggressively homophobic script, the symbolic penetration that took place in Camp Breadbasket also operated to mark the bodies of the detainees as 'Other' along (homo)sexualised lines.

As Edward Said (1979) has demonstrated, since the late eighteenth century, the Arabic Orient has been designated as a site of particular lasciviousness and eroticism, with harems of veiled and exotic women, lustful and deviant men, and a proclivity for male homosexuality. Today, these ideas of sexual excess remain. Hennessey recalls catching one of the Afghan interpreters "shagging a donkey through night-vision goggles" (2008: 222), while Docherty jokes about the "exact role performed by the tea-boy doting on every ANA officer…[being] a source of endless banter amongst the Brits working with the Afghans" (2007: 93)[126]. Docherty also alludes to a greater degree of homosexuality existing amongst Afghan soldiers as opposed to their British counterparts: "Due to the complete absence of any female company, intimate male relationships, sometimes homosexual, commonly develop" (*ibid*.: 93). Elsewhere a 2010 report as part of the Human Terrain System (HTS) Project, and requested by British officers to "help them understand the sexual behaviours of locals and Afghan comrades" (Farmer 2010), concluded that a "culturally-contrived homosexuality…appears to affect a far greater population base then (*sic*) researchers would argue is attributable to natural inclination" (Cardinalli 2010: 1). Statements such as this rearticulate Orientalist assumptions that mark homosexuality as something 'Arab' men are culturally predisposed towards.

Neither Docherty nor the HTS report reflect on how such intimate and supposedly 'homosexual' relationships between (in this case) Afghan, and in particular, Pashtun, men differ from those between British soldiers. Docherty writes that such male-male intimacies are just a "temporary diversion…rather than anything with long-term meaning" (2007: 93), and the HTS report notes that Pashtun men practicing affectionate or sexual acts with one another do not self-identify themselves as 'homosexual', "at least not in the Western sense" (Cardinalli 2010: 4) (the report however, continues to refer to them as such). Indeed, the

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[126] During my fieldwork an officer told me a similar story. Discussing his experiences in Afghanistan and interactions with the local population, he claimed it was common knowledge amongst British military personnel that Afghan men liked to take young, effeminate-looking boys as lovers, and that the more effeminate such a young boy looked, the more social status the Afghan man would receive. He went on to tell me that a military colleague had actually written a piece about it for an internal journal or newsletter that circulated during a tour of duty. There was unfortunately no way of me being able to get access to this.

report claims that to "practice homosexuality" (which, implied in the report, can vary from feeling love for another man, to physical sexual relations, to being "freer with companionship, affection, emotional and artistic expression" [*ibid*.: 2]) does not carry negative social outcomes in Afghan societies. Rather, "it appears to be the label, not the action or the [sexual] preference, that poses the greatest problem" (*ibid*.: 5). How this differs from particular cultures in the UK, including military cultures, is not explored. How it differs from the rumours of recruits 'noshing each other off' and the Parachute Regiment being a 'gay' unit (see Chapter Three) is not unpacked. Like their Afghan counterparts, it appears to be the label, not the action, which determines sexuality within the British military[127].

However, while British liberal warriors remain resolutely heterosexual in these practices, it seems that borders mapping a separation between the homosocial – and at times homoerotic and hypersexualised – and homosexual, are either not present, or do not operate as effectively, in the case of a local Arab male population. For Afghan soldiers, close bonds are (homo)sexualised. A senior rank served tea by a subservient tea-boy suggests not just a display of custom and rank, but a sexual relation of dominance and deviance. In the homophobic abuses at Camp Breadbasket we can see these contemporary hauntings of (homo)sexualised colonial logics violently played out in the simulated sexual acts detainees were forced to take part in. Given however, that male group nudity and simulated anal sex takes place in the homosocial environment of basic training amongst troops (as well, according to rumours, actual practices of 'homosexual' practice), this suggests there are further interlocking discourses are at work.

All of these feminising and (homo)sexualising discourses are interlocking with – constituted by and constitutive of – discourses of race. Understandings of the feminised, virgin lands of colonies, populated by those unable to rule themselves, are always already marked by understandings of race. During the era of the British Empire, Britain's approach to ruling and controlling their predominantly white colonies (America and Australia for example) and their non-white colonies (their numerous colonies in Africa and Asia for example) varied remarkably, and ideas of racial superiority were integral to policy decisions. In the nineteenth century "responsible self-government" was introduced allowing colonies deemed sufficiently politically mature to be granted authority to pass laws on their behalf,

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[127] The report also details the negative response and "severe tribal and familial ostracization" (Cardinalli 2010: 5) the label of 'homosexuality' receives from local communities. This may of course be akin to being forced to leave your career because you are an openly gay soldier (as was the case until 2011 in the American military, the employer of the report's author), or being subjected to overtly homophobic insults within your career (not uncommon in both the British and American militaries).

while the imperial government in Britain retained authority in key areas such as foreign policy and defence. However,

> this experiment in government occurred mostly in…colonies of white settlement, underlining the racial distinctions commonly applied in colonial governance. Only those areas where white European settlers had stayed to build new lives were seen as fit for this experiment in self-determination; non-white populations were invariably classed as too backward to be entrusted with such powers (Levine 2007: 86).

And it is these understandings of white supremacy and racial inferiority that interlock with gendered and sexualised discourses. As non-white subjects, the local populations of Iraq and Afghanistan are marked by racial discourses of immaturity, barbarism and savagery, with the abuses at Camp Breadbasket working to emasculate and (homo)sexualise "those who are already effectively infantilized, if not feminized, by virtue of their identity as colonized and racialized 'others'" (Kaufman-Osborn 2005: 609). As Richter-Montpetit states, "The hetero-patriarchal association of the penetrated body as passive and feminine, and of the penetrator as virile and masculine…intersects clearly with racialized notions of inferiority and superiority" (2007: 46). It is the appearance of a ghost in the form of the abuses at Camp Breadbasket that the haunting colonial desires and fears of British Empire are revealed. As the ghostly materialisation of that which had been rendered *un*-visible, the abuse reveals the gendered, sexualised and raced colonial discourses at work in a liberal warrior's (re)production, as well as their own (homo)sexualised transgressions.

THE DISRUPTION AND SELF-REINFORCEMENT OF A LIBERAL WARRIOR

While the above discussion traces the ways in which gendered, sexualised and raced colonial logics that haunt a contemporary liberal warrior are rendered visible in the abuse meted out at Camp Breadbasket, I now want to unpack *why* the violences took place. Following on from my previous chapter that tracked a liberal warrior and its myths of asexuality and discipline from the carefully controlled environments of basic training to the messy and unpredictable sphere of war, the borders that map a subject as rational, in control and heterosexual begin to be made fragile. In Iraq, as combat warfare turned to humanitarian and counterinsurgency operations with little prior planning and a local population – in the words of Brigadier Carter, a commander in Iraq during the Camp Breadbasket abuses – who were "initially ecstatic with happiness" turned "suspicious" and "frustrated" (Aitken 2008: 6), myths integral to a liberal warrior began to become undone. As an insurgency rapidly gained in force in the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's defeat, soldiers on the ground found themselves without the large numbers of troops needed to

effectively engage in counterinsurgency tactics. Coupled with a local population who were growing increasingly dissatisfied as aspirations and expectations of a post-Saddam Iraq were not being met, who soldiers thought they were (myths relating to what a liberal warrior is), and what they were doing (myths relating to a liberal warrior's nation and its role in the international arena), became confused. When soldiers who have been constructed as rational and controlled liberal warriors, and have been told they are engaged in a latter-day Great Game in the service of Western liberal values, spend their time guarding against petty thieves, suffer demoralising defeats at the hands of an enemy less well equipped, and experience a population less-than enamoured with their presence, who they think they are begins to be disrupted. Following both Whitworth (2004) and Richter-Montpetit (2007) I claim that it is through violences enacted on the bodies of Iraqi detainees that soldiers both seek to reassert control and "(re)constitute their militarized masculine self" (Richter-Montpetit 2007: 45). However, it is through these violences that hauntings a liberal warrior has tried so hard to expel – hauntings of (homo)sexualised transgressions and colonial desires and fears – are rendered visible. The (im)possibility of a liberal warrior is thus exposed in the same moment of its (re)articulation.

Razack (2004) uses Hugh Ridley's language of "functional violence" and "self-justifying violence" (Ridley 1983: 141) to describe the violence inflicted by Canadian peacekeepers against the Somali population in 1993. Writing about a body of fiction that portrays European colonial activity and the types of masculine figures that inhabit these worlds, Ridley explores the violence reported in colonial literature and concludes that "very little of it has its origin in explicit racial ideologies, even if it drew on such ideologies for its justification" (*ibid*.: 140). Specifically, Ridley distinguishes between 'functional violence' and 'self-justifying violence'. Functional violence is described as "those actions which were concerned with internal security, and described by clichés such as 'teaching them a lesson' or 'keeping them in their place'". Ridley locates it "in colonial fiction as a sort of groundbass, justifying the day-to-day brutality and insensitivity of white rule". Functional violence was therefore an "explicit defence of white violence…built on dismissive attitudes to the lesser races who were the objects of violence" (*ibid*.: 141). Ridley also draws attention to other links between imperialism and violence, violence "in situations which involve no threat to whites". Ridley describes the casual beating up of an Annamite[128] soldier by the character Barnavaux in the French novel *Sur la Veste Terre* by Pierre Mille, writing that he "does so not because he felt threatened, but in order to prove something about himself. His violence was an assertion

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[128] From what then (1900) would have been Eastern Indochina (today: Laos, Vietnam and a small area of Cambodia).

of membership in the colonial elite". For Ridley, this type of violence is 'self-justifying': violence not as a "result of white insecurity in the face of blacks, but stemmed from the whites' insecurity and disorientation in their own community. Violence was shown here…to be a kind of initiation into an in-group, the racial elite" (*ibid.*: 141). Violence, therefore, emerged just as much from whites' view of themselves as it did from their views of non-white Others (*ibid.*: 143).

While, as in Razack's analysis of the violences in Somalia, it can be hard to distinguish which forms of violence are being deployed in Camp Breadbasket, with simultaneity and overlap likely, it is the idea of self-justifying violence that I want to explore in a little more detail. As a liberal warrior experiences confusion and uncertainty over who he is and what he is doing, bodies marked as Other along racial, cultural and religious lines confront him. Bodies marked as Other according to gendered, sexualised and racialised colonial logics. As a masculinity forged so intimately in relation to the bodies of these Others, the anxieties of a liberal warrior can easily be projected onto the bodies of the local population (Razack 2004: 63). As Frantz Fanon comments, the black man's body – or in this case, the brown man – is the space upon which a coloniser's traumas are projected. It is "the space on which men can become men" (*ibid.*: 85). It is then, a liberal warrior's fear of emasculation, fear of inferiority and fear of their own homosexualised desires – in short, a liberal warrior's fear of hauntings, their constitutive outside – that we see being violently played out on the bodies of the Iraqi prisoners. It is the violent materialisation of ghosts that give notice to hauntings that had attempted to be rendered *un*-visible. Marking an Iraqi body as feminised, (homo)sexualised and primitive, may thus be a strategy of self-(re)articulation, self-securitisation for a white Western liberal warrior. Just as Said stated that Orientalism "has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world" (1979: 12), so too can the violences inflicted upon the bodies of the Iraqi detainees be viewed as having less to do with *their* bodies and *their* subjectivity as it does over the bodies and subjectivities of liberal warriors. In effect, the violences are not just self-justifying, but self-reinforcing.

If then, the violences played out in Camp Breadbasket are more a manifestation of the fears and hauntings of a liberal warrior – an 'unhappy echo' of who they think they are, who they want to be – suggestions that it was a "belief in an allegedly 'exotic', frail Iraqi masculinity, fraught with fears of nakedness and homosexuality, might not have been the chief motivator" (Enloe 2004b: 99). As with the American abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, which came to public attention in early 2004, much was made of the particular humiliation and degradation an Iraqi man would feel due to inherent cultural

differences between Western and Arab men. In America it was reported that neoconservative politicians relied upon analyses from Raphael Patia's 1973 book, *The Arab Mind*, which claimed "sexual humiliation would be especially effective in 'breaking' Muslim prisoners… Sexual humiliation related to homosexuality would be particularly shameful and, therefore…particularly effective" (Zurbriggen 2008: 306). As Razack has pointed to, such claims "fit nicely with the 'clash of the civilizations' thesis that had come to dominate Western explanations for conflict between West and non-West, and the Islamic world in particular". Few, Razack states, have questioned the Orientalist underpinnings of this claim. It suggests "[u]nlike us, they are sexually repressed, homophobic[129], and misogynist[130] and are likely to crack in sexualized situations, particularly those involving women dominating men or those involving sex between men" (2008: 65). Such comments deflect attention away from our own society's cultural frameworks that make these violences possible. Wouldn't such violences "in fact humiliate men of all cultures both because they are violent and because they target what it means to be a man in patriarchy" (*ibid.*: 65)? Is it not true that the sexualised abuses are so humiliating and 'work' to such an extent because both the perpetrator and victim share a cultural framework that denigrate women and gay men (Zurbriggen 2008: 308)? A framework that it could be argued is more exaggerated, more entrenched and more on display in the military than in much of British society. It was then perpetrators' own masculinised fears of feminisation and (homo)sexualisation that guided the abuse. Abuse that was produced and understood as so humiliating, through shared cultural frameworks of misogyny, homophobia and patriarchy.

To summarise: gendered, sexualised and racialised colonial logics that haunt a militarised masculine liberal warrior subject are rendered visible in the ghostly materialisation of violences enacted on the bodies of Iraqi prisoners in Camp Breadbasket. While such interlocking discourses of difference mark the bodies of the detainees as the site of such violences, the violences themselves reflect more about the subjectivities of the perpetrators than the victims. It is through the positioning of the Iraqi prisoners as feminised,

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[129] Islamic societies are frequently portrayed as vehemently homophobic in comparison to the 'enlightened' and tolerant West (this is despite only recent bans on homosexuals serving in the British and American militaries, and openly homophobic rhetoric coming from Christian churches). One newspaper report on homosexuality in Iraq stated that, "Homosexuality is seen as so immoral that it qualifies as an 'honour killing' to murder someone who is gay – and the perpetrator can escape punishment. Section 111 of Iraq's penal code lays out protections for murder when people are acting against Islam" (Copestake 2006). This assumed homophobia was also implied in the HTS report on 'Pashtun Sexuality' detailed previously.

[130] Islamic society's resistance to equal rights and its misogyny has been played out endlessly in the Western media. From the much-vaunted banner of women's rights used during the lead up to the 2001 invasion into Afghanistan, to the frequent picturing of veiled Arabic women, there is no question that 'our' women are more liberated, freer and more equal, than theirs.

(homo)sexualised and inferior that a perpetrator can come to know himself[131] as masculine, heterosexual and superior. As an identity that is produced in and through myths that have no stable meanings and no fixed foundations, a contemporary liberal warrior is inherently unstable, it requires continual (re)citation and (re)articulation. While during basic training practices of male group nudity and homoerotic play operate to (re)inscribe the borders of a liberal warrior, as these performances pass from the barracks to Camp Breadbasket, bodies marked as 'Other' along racial, gendered and sexualised lines, become the surface upon which (homo)sexualised and colonial hauntings are revealed, and the impossibility of their expulsion made clear. Here, male group nakedness does not represent asexuality and fraternity, instead the aggressively homophobic abuse works to emasculate, humiliate and infantilise its victims. Hauntings of (homo)sexuality are however, always already present in *both* sites of male group nudity. While in basic training hauntings are rendered *un*-visible through the boundary-mapping devices of homophobia, during the prisoner abuse at Camp Breadbasket, forcibly performed by bodies already marked as Other, the nakedness is explicitly (homo)sexualised and hauntings violently visible on the bodies of the detainees. To present these two performances as distinct, symmetrically opposing practices is to fail to pay attention to the always already presence of (homo)sexuality in basic training which was detailed in my previous chapter, even when such hauntings sometimes materialise in the same way (in nakedness for example). Presenting these performances as opposing also fails to take into account the significance of Britain's colonial past and its continuing hauntings. It is to fail to pay attention to the relation between ghosts and what has been rendered *un*-visible. That ghosts – if we choose to engage with them – give notice to the impossibility of 'complete' expulsion and to the always already haunting presences of that which had been concealed.

For while abuses by British troops that both reach the public eye and result in prosecution, such as those at Camp Breadbasket, remain relatively rare (although, as noted earlier, it is also worth noting that there is anecdotal evidence to suggest such abuses are far more frequent than is publicly known), viewing these as exceptional and/or unrelated to the homosocial and aggressively heterosexual practices of basic training, and the colonial logics they are produced in and through, re-inscribes a boundary that works to make *un*-visible their connectivity. By considering instead, an unbroken continuum between the 'harmless' homosocial behaviour of basic training and the 'excessive' and (homo)sexualised abuses at Camp Breadbasket, particular gendered and sexualised discourses can be seen to be operating 'properly' (or so the military would claim) and obscenely in both sites. Similarly,

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[131] In the case of Camp Breadbasket all perpetrators who were prosecuted were men.

interlocking gendered, sexualised and racialised discourses that mark the bodies of the Iraqi detainees can be traced back to the time of Britain's empire and 'civilising mission', albeit now the hauntings of these colonial logics are wrapped up in contemporary understandings of 'cultural difference' and a rhetoric of 'partnership'. While these discourses work to uphold and rearticulate the myth of a liberal warrior, what they render *un*-visible, and the violent ghostly apparitions that are produced simultaneously draw attention to its (im)possibility.

THE MURDER OF BAHA MOUSA

A soldier's unique position in society – sanctioned to wield legitimate violence against particular Others, with enough force to kill – is underwritten with the assumption that this violence is controlled. Basic training and a soldier's on-going assessment and development throughout their career are assumed to inculcate them with the knowledge, ability and discipline to be capable of inflicting violence during combat that is proportionate, controlled and accountable. The myth of discipline, integral to the constitution of today's militarised masculine liberal warrior, works to mark a border between what is considered to be controlled and disciplined (and by extension legitimate) violence, and uncontrolled and undisciplined (and thus illegitimate) violence. A soldier who gets into a fight while on leave will (in theory) face disciplinary action if his superiors are informed[132], however, a soldier will likewise be disciplined for failing to engage in violence ordered by his superiors while in a combat zone, or may be praised for demonstrating a particular 'aptitude' for violence in battle. For example, in 2011, Acting Sergeant Dipprasad Pun, a Gurkha fighting in the British Army in Afghanistan, was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross, the second highest military medal for bravery, for single-handedly fighting off around twelve Taliban insurgents. When his ammunition ran out (all 400 bullets, 17 grenades and one mine), Pun resorted to battering his attackers with a sandbag and his machine gun tripod (Bingham 2011). This ability for unrestrained violence is similarly encouraged during basic training as the below anecdote in Hennessey's first memoir attests. Instructors, understanding the violence and aggression needed to bayonet an enemy meant that Hennessey and his cohort were

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[132] As John Hockey has pointed to, superiors may in fact view such off-duty fighting as functional to the military organisation as a whole (inasmuch as it displays and reinforces such privileged characteristics such as loyalty, solidarity and aggression). However, even in such "licentious" displays of violence something of a sense of discipline or restraint is expected. Privates are expected to not "tear the arse out of it" (in essence, they are not to seriously injure anyone, cause no extreme damage to private property, or involve the civilian authorities) (1986: 120).

beasted and beasted until we hated the world and the only way to stop the pain was to give in completely to all the screaming and aggression which goes with charging around the assault course sticking sandbag effigies. Everybody has to give in and then we're just running around screaming at each other like animals, picturing the faces of everyone we ever hated and going mad with horrible big fuck-off knives (2008: 73).

When Hennessey watches the video back of himself during the training he feels "a scared judder down my spine – the mad-man charging around screaming obscenities till he has no voice left, exhausted from plunging the end of his rifle into sandbag after sandbag is surely not me, surely?" (*ibid.*: 74). While such a distinction between legitimate and illegitimate violence may appear obvious, and the boundary between such acts clear, what is considered legitimate and controlled violence, and illegitimate and uncontrolled violence is not always so neat.

Reiterating my previous chapter, the discipline so carefully inculcated during basic training and displayed upon the bodies of recruits in their stance, dress and regimented movement is rendered absurd in the messy and unpredictable operational environment. Hauntings expelled through daily routine, inspection and strictly imposed discipline return at full force and materialise as ghosts upon the bodies of soldiers with hair unkempt, beards remaining unshaved and uniforms either covered in a film of sand or discarded in the heat of the Iraqi or Afghan sun. Borders that had been mapped, delineating a disciplined liberal warrior are shown to be porous and incomplete. That the boundary between the disciplined and undisciplined is messy and unclear does not simply (re)produce contradictory and paradoxical (re)enactments (inasmuch as particular practices can leak in either direction of the boundary), but also makes unstable the borders tracing the limits of legitimate and illegitimate violence. As the beginning of this chapter documents, over the past decade British troops stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan have been at the centre of accusations relating to prisoner abuse, illegitimate troop violence and mistreatment of civilians. In turn, public debates and enquiries have questioned what is considered 'legitimate' or 'controlled' violence in a warzone, and where[133] a boundary between the legitimate and illegitimate should, or does, lie.

Arrested along with several colleagues in 2003 after British troops found a number of rifles and pistols in the hotel safe where Baha Mousa worked (the hotel staff claimed they

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[133] Of course by asking *where* such a boundary may lie implicitly assumes that such a boundary exists in a static, fixed position. This chapter will demonstrate that attempts at marking and fixing this border is both an impossibility and makes possible particular militarised violences.

were used for security), Mousa was taken to a British military base in Darul Dhyafa for 'routine questioning'. Three days later Mousa's father was visited by military policemen who told him his son had died in custody. It later emerged that Mousa had been beaten to death and sustained 93 separate injuries (Balakrishnan 2008). At what point then did the violence inflicted on Mousa by British soldiers cross the boundary mapped by the myth of discipline from the controlled to the uncontrolled? Was the boundary crossed in the violence the eight other men seized alongside Mousa, but who survived, were subjected to? Was the verbal abuse legitimate? Being made to dance like Michael Jackson? Being burned, stamped and urinated on, and forced to lie down over full latrines (Simpson 2009)? A 1972 ban – and thus an explicit *de*legitimising of such practices – on hooding, 'stressing' (forcing detainees to stand in stress positions, for example, with their legs bent and arms out), deprivation of food and sleep, and coercive use of noise, had been ignored. Instead, "conditioning" treatments supposedly used to "soften up" detainees before questioning were deemed necessary (Balakrishnan 2008). Given that Mousa and the eight other prisoners were already hooded, restrained and of little or no threat to those who had captured them, the systematic beatings and abuse they were subjected to appear far from controlled or disciplined.

The boundaries marked by the myth of discipline that map the unquestioning obedience of basic training, the adaptability and risk-taking behaviour of combat, and the uncontrolled violences enacted on the body of Mousa and his eight fellow captives, do not signify separate and mutually exclusive sites, but are instead located on a continuum. It is a continuum that the myth of discipline seeks to deny and make *un*-visible through its boundary-marking. As has been shown, the limits marked, the ways of enacting a militarised masculine liberal warrior identity, is not fixed by hard or solid borders, but can always shift and leak through a porous border. While this means that particular performative and discursive 'doings' of a liberal warrior can seep through the borders and become a haunting 'undoing' (and vice-versa), it also means the control and legitimacy that underwrites violences soldiers are trained to employ are also subject to such hauntings, particularly when taking place in sites marked by interlocking colonial logics. For example, *The Aitken Report* states that some aspects of the banned "Five Techniques" described above may not, in themselves, be illegal. "[T]here will be occasions", the report declares, "where it will be perfectly reasonable to deprive temporarily a captured person of his sight or hearing", with the report going on to give examples of ensuring the security of our own troops, or to stop collusion with other captured personnel (Aitken 2004: 14). The section ends stating, "The issue is therefore to an extent one of context; and the Army's challenge must be to ensure that as clear a delineation exists as possible to guide all soldiers in what is and is not

acceptable" (*ibid.*: 14). It is then, not the actions themselves that are illegitimate, but the context in which they are enacted within that makes them so. Given that the dead body of Mousa did not just display the marks of the 'Five Techniques' but was catalogued as having sustained 93 separate injuries, there appeared, in this 'context', to be a complete absence of a border, a complete disregard for the discipline and control that was inculcated during basic training.

The reflection and deflection of violence onto the body of the Other

It is by seeking to understand what kind of context soldiers believed themselves to be operating within that colonial logics are revealed and that such logics, in turn, will help explain how Mousa became the embodiment of the ghost: the body upon which the violent return of the hauntings of messiness and uncontrollability were enacted and materialised. Like the peoples who populate the land, the environment soldiers find themselves within is primarily defined by 'Otherness'. As McLaughlin says of Iraq, "It was like living on another planet" (2007: 205). References to the environment, particularly its brutality or savagery, has been an enduring feature of colonial literature with the landscape representing the evil of the land itself rather than the inherent brutality of imperialism (Razack 2004: 58). *The Aitken Report* describes "[t]he context in which operations have been conducted in Iraq has been exceptionally complex". Returning to Brigadier Carter's description of Iraq in 2004:

> …there was a rising trend of shooting incidents…[and] early indications that the threat to British soldiers was developing… Law and order had completely collapsed. The Iraqi Police Service had melted away; the few security guards who remained were old and incapable; and the Iraqi Armed Forces had been captured, disbanded or deserted. Criminals had been turned out onto the streets… Crime was endemic and in parts of Basra a state of virtual anarchy prevailed. Hijackings, child kidnappings, revenge killings, car theft and burglary were rife (Aitken 2008: 6-7).

The 'complexity' of the Iraqi operational environment as described here appears to be the sole result of the incivility of Iraqi society and its population. Security forces were either incapable or had deserted, criminals controlled the streets, and society was on the verge of collapse. The role of the British military is curiously absent from this description, appearing only as a potential (innocent) victim of the violence that was spreading through Iraq. The British military's complicity in the initial invasion and downfall of a stable, if brutal, government, and destruction of essential infrastructure is neglected to be mentioned.

On this 'lawless' terrain, "Life was so cheap…nobody batted an eyelid at the dead dogs and fly-ridden carcasses of livestock lying on the city's streets. Everything seemed so rotten, old and decayed" (McLaughlin 2007: 215). Those who lived there – "the uncivilized world" – were "clearly not of the same legal and moral order" (Razack 2004: 54) as the white European and American men who were occupying their land. Unlike the disciplined liberal warriors of the British military, recourse to violence was a casual, everyday occurrence. Docherty relates numerous stories of the ANA Captain Hameed resorting to extreme displays of violence in response to minor misdemeanours or at seemingly random points. One incident involves Hameed punching an ANA soldier full in the face before kicking him in the chest at finding out this soldier has been found smoking hashish. After this savage attack "Captain Hameed, smoothing his combats, settles back down on his chair and resumes his glass of tea" (Docherty 2007: 88). Another account describes Hameed as knocking down an old Afghan man in a local village and punching him in the face (*ibid*.: 170). Violence thus becomes what the locals, or 'natives', understand best.

The myth of discipline posits violence meted out by British liberal warriors as legitimate in part because of its controlled and disciplined performance. How however, might this shift on a terrain understood through interlocking colonial discourses and marked by barbarism, savagery and lawlessness? In this 'context', violence is required. As with imperial manliness which "often required violence as necessary for the natives' own good", and consisted of "an imperial mix of violence, governance and compassion" (Razack 2004: 63), the contemporary liberal warrior may, at times, need to resort to force to effectively maintain control and carry out his task. Mousa, taken in for 'routine questioning', needed to be 'softened up' and a senior intelligence officer, Major Michael Peebles, instructed the soldiers guarding Mousa and the other prisoners to use the "conditioning techniques" discussed above[134]. At the time Peebles believed – or so he claims – that conditioning treatments were lawful and remembered telling the guards, "Don't go over the top" (cited in Hawley 2011). In this context of casual violence and a different legal and moral order, what exactly constitutes 'going over the top'? At what point did the conditioning techniques bleed into illegitimate violences? How important was it that the bodies that were the site of this violence were marked by racialised colonial logics? As Razack states, "Northern nations, negotiate the tension between democracy and military intervention through the colour line itself. That is, we are able to participate in aggressive interventions on the strength of the argument that the natives will understand little else but force" (*ibid*.: 38-9). Violence used in

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[134] Similarly, the commanding officer of the soldiers involved in the Camp Breadbasket abuses instructed his men to go "Ali Baba hunting" and "work them hard" if found as punishment for looting supplies (Younge 2005).

this context could be, to borrow Ridley's term, understood as "functional violence" (Ridley 1983: 140). Rather than 'teaching the natives a lesson', force is used here as "diplomacy and other 'civilized' ways of interaction are not appropriate – the only language 'they' understand is violence" (Richter-Montpetit 2007: 42).

As with the abuses at Camp Breadbasket, this episode of functional violence may not be easily separable from self-justifying violence. Like the photographs that emerged from Camp Breadbasket, the bloodied and bruised headshot of Mousa that was circulated in the media appears to rupture stories and myths told about 'our' liberal project and 'our' liberal warriors. How then could such violences work to (re)articulate a militarised masculine liberal warrior? Taking Razack's observation that a curious inversion appears to underpin "the relationship between stereotypical representation and material practices" (2004: 61), I will argue that it is through a reflection of culpability of the soldiers' own violence back onto the bodies of their victims that these violences can be understood as self-justifying, thus working to (re)inscribe the borders of a liberal warrior. Stereotypical colonial representations paint 'Oriental' lands and the people who fill them as barbaric savages whose recourse to violence comes instantaneously. Faced with a local population whom are "[f]ar from being powerless victims", instead being "intelligent, tough, resourceful and cunning" (McLaughlin 2007: 148), and an "enemy that does not comply with international humanitarian law" (Aitken 2008: 13), it is not the occupying troops that should be feared, but the occupying troops who should be fear*ful*. It is this spurious fear of the 'Other', and the projection of potential or actual violence upon them, that "has been a key feature [in] constituting the innocence of imperial whiteness" (Thobani 2007: 179) and, in turn, the construction of a militarised masculine liberal warrior. It is the Others' potential cruelty and violence that explains the brutality inflicted upon them; "*their* cannibalism, *their* treatment of women, and *their* homophobia, [that] justifies the savagery that the West metes out" (Razack 2008: 79, emphases in original).

In *The Aitken Report*, "Conduct After Capture" (CAC) training is discussed with regard to the use of illegal techniques used against Iraqi detainees. "CAC training simulates the sort of treatment that *our* people might receive from an enemy that does not comply with international humanitarian law, and therefore introduces participants to illegal I&TQ [Interrogation and Tactical Questioning] techniques" (Aitken 2008: 13, my emphasis). It was suggested that it was perhaps because of some soldiers' exposure to this training that there was some confusion over what qualified as legitimate or illegitimate questioning techniques and some soldiers inadvertently crossed a line. The violences inflicted on Mousa then, were

a reflection of the violences British soldiers expected to experience at the hands of a barbaric and savage enemy, they were not a product, or external effect, of a liberal warrior. As Victoria Basham states in relation to *The Aitken Report*, it

> highlights the potential cruelty of an enemy so barbaric that the Army has no choice but to introduce its soldiers to illegal interrogation and tactical questioning techniques in case they fall victim to them… If a few bad apples in its midst acted like a barbaric enemy can be assumed to act, this not (*sic*) the fault of the Army, it is the fault of that barbaric enemy for creating the necessity for the Army to train its soldiers in illegal methods of interrogation (2009: 12-3).

It is through this reflecting of the perpetrator's violences back onto the victim that such violence can be understood as self-justifying, and borders mapping a liberal warrior as controlled and disciplined (re)inscribed.

Understanding the illegitimate violence inflicted on Mousa and the other eight detainees as a ghostly embodiment means that notice is given to the always already haunting presence of messiness and uncontrollability. Materialisations of this haunting however, emerge in numerous sites and across a whole continuum. It is a haunting that materialises as a ghost whether a soldier is in the barracks or on the battlefield: in the 'styling' of a uniform to unwashed bodies and unkempt hair, to the messiness of battle, and the broken and bloodied body of Baha Mousa. These ghosts remind us that what has been rendered *un*-visible is always already a (seething) presence, and it is the context that renders hauntings visible in such different ways, that produces such different ghostly emergences. In Iraq in 2003, interlocking colonial discourses produced liberal warriors who came to know themselves as both civilised and vulnerable in an environment marked by aberrant violence and permanently surrounded by danger. In this context what violence is considered 'controlled' or 'legitimate' shifts. Without law and confronted by a local population abiding by a different moral order, force becomes 'the only language *they* understand'.

Violence meted out by liberal warriors does not only operate to reveal hauntings of uncontrollability and racialised colonial logics, but simultaneously works to (re)articulate and (re)inscribe the borders of the perpetrators through its reflection and then deflection of these hauntings onto the bodies of the victims. It is because of the strength of these interlocking discourses and myths that a liberal warrior's barbarism and brutality is deflected and understood as a replication of the Other's violence, rendering a liberal warrior's Self as innocent, disciplined and controlled. In effect, these moments of rupture in the myths we tell about a liberal warrior, these ghostly materialisations, both reveal hauntings that trouble and disrupt its subjectivity, while simultaneously operating to (re)assert this always-

precarious identity. It is in the impossibility of holding steady the borders of a liberal warrior – in attempts at even marking such borders – that violences can begin to be made explicable[135]. It is through the (re)iteration of myths that map the borders of a liberal warrior, and the (re)citation of interlocking discourses that he comes to know himself through, that bodies marked as Other become the site of a liberal warrior's (violent) (re)enactment and the ghostly embodiment of their hauntings.

The Aitken Report notes that failings in "leadership, education and training" (2008: 10) all helped create the conditions under which such abuses took place. There was "scant mention" in training on the treatment of civilian captives; no specific instructions on the correct handling of detainees; the rules and practices for interrogation were not "as clearly articulated as it is now"; and that is to say nothing of the failure to plan for the post-invasion nation building, the uncertainty of Iraqi reaction to the invasion, and a lack of modernisation of operational doctrine after the Balkans and Northern Ireland (*ibid*.: 10-16). The report goes on to state that these "are failings that the Army has recognised, and taken specific action to rectify as part of its process of continuous professional development" (*ibid*.: 16). However, what if it is not because there are serious failings in military leadership, education and training that such violences took place, but that, in some ways, the contradictory practices of military training and education are *working*. It is because of the attempted constitution of a militarised masculine liberal warrior within such (im)possible borders that transgressions occur and identities rendered unstable. Constituted in and through paradoxical practices (for example, male group nudity in an aggressively heterosexual environment, the banning of the 'Five Techniques' except in 'particular contexts'), a liberal warrior emerges who is always already incomplete, never 'fixed' and who is rendered precarious in its very moment of becoming. Ultimately soldiers produced this way are set up to fail. There can be no external effects to this identity that are not as messy, uncertain and fragile as the subject produced.

It is important however, to heed Derek Gregory's advice: that we should not allow "spectacular violence...to blind us to the *banality* of the colonial present" (2004: 16, emphasis in original). For Gregory the colonial present is "set in motion through mundane cultural forms and cultural practices that mark other people as irredeemably 'Other' and that license the unleashing of exemplary violence against them" (*ibid*.: 16). While the violent

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[135] Similarly, and as my previous chapter detailed, it was in the confirming of a recruit's heterosexuality, or non-homosexuality, through homoerotic and hypersexualised acts, and the enforcing of discipline and control through the minutiae of dress, posture and movement, that (non-violent) ghosts emerged and hauntings were revealed.

materialisations of ghosts detailed in this chapter give us much scope to trace the incompleteness of the myths, the interlocking gendered, sexualised and raced discourses, and hauntings of Britain's colonial past, there is also much that can be garnered from the 'everyday', mundane practices of liberal warriors. Of soldiers' impressions of the "alien land[s]" (McLaughlin 2007: 220) they have been sent to; their understandings of themselves as "latter-day Great-Gamer[s]" (Docherty 2007: 44); and their everyday encounters with the local population. There is also much that can be explored in the casualness and banality of a liberal warrior's response to violence. How ordinary the scenes at Camp Breadbasket must have seemed to Fusilier Gary Bartlam for him to take his camera to be developed in his local shop on his return from duty like any other holiday 'snaps'. That these scenes were photographed in the first place, absent of any concerted effort to hide the evidence, may say more about the banality of officially sanctioned violence (Kaufman-Osborn 2005: 611) than the behaviour of the individual soldiers or a failure of leadership in the higher ranks. How normal the sounds of prisoners screaming for days at a time must have sounded to British Army doctor, Derek Keilloh, to have ignored them for days before presiding over the failed resuscitation attempt of Baha Mousa (Carter 2012). Gregory is right, to ignore this banality is to ignore how spectacular violences become possible.

Today's soldiers are not only produced through the discourses and practices of counterinsurgency warfare, but are imbued with hauntings of the gendered, raced and sexualised colonial logics that shaped and made possible the era of the British Empire. While they do not have the crudeness of the discourses at play during that time, their contemporary (re)emergence works to mark a liberal warrior as benevolent and benign, innocent and vulnerable. Understanding the abuses at Camp Breadbasket and the murder of Baha Mousa as ghosts, what do they both give notice to and how have they been made possible through a liberal warrior's constitution? Using Hugh Ridley's definitions of 'functional' and 'self-justifying' violence, this chapter has suggested the violences on display at Camp Breadbasket and on the body of Mousa say more about the perpetrators than the victims. While functional violence can be defined as that which 'teaches the natives a lesson', self-justifying violence works to (re)assert a perpetrator's own sense of self. On one level then we can view the abuses at Camp Breadbasket as punishment for stealing food, and the beating of Mousa as an extreme technique of 'softening up' a prisoner prior to questioning. On another however, these violences can be understood as 'ghosts'. The violent materialisation and embodiment of hauntings of (homo)sexuality and messiness, interlocking

with colonial logics which work to (re)inscribe the borders of a liberal warrior. It is soldiers' own fears of (homo)sexualised desires and transgressions that are played out in Camp Breadbasket, and their own understandings of a savage and barbaric Oriental Other that is reflected onto the body of Mousa. While such actions work to (re)map the borders marking a liberal warrior, they simultaneously reveal the (im)possibility of such a subjectivity. A liberal warrior is always precarious, never stable and 'failure' is inevitable. A subjectivity this fragile will have unpredictable external effects, effects that in certain contexts may materialise as violent ghosts.

Violence however, is not always exclusively aimed at the bodies of Others. The ever-rising numbers of British soldiers killed or injured in the conflicts of Iraq and Afghanistan renders it explicit that violence in war can be, and is, directed towards multiple bodies, including those of liberal warriors themselves. In what ways does a militarised masculine liberal warrior subjectivity operate on and around these dead and injured soldiers? To what extent is it implicated in making possible these violences? The needs and demands of counterinsurgency has not just led to a more 'benign' or 'cool-headed' soldiering, but also to a re-centring of the human as opposed to technological body in war. As soldiers patrol on foot in an increasingly asymmetric war where IEDs have become the weapon of choice for the enemy, soldiers own bodies become the sites of violence: blown off limbs, torn flesh, even complete evisceration. Understanding the aftermath of an IED strike as a ghost, my next chapter will pay attention to the particular ways such ghosts have been 'read' and understood, and what hauntings they reveal.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCEALING BRUTALITY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST THE SELF

In 2010 the American General, David Petraeus, issued his first tactical directive since assuming command of the international forces in Afghanistan. This directive "doubled down on the orders imposed by his predecessor that put a premium on protecting civilians first" (Motlagh 2010). Previous to Petraeus' appointment, his predecessor, General Stanley McChrystal, had issued a series of orders that "limited air strikes and hot pursuit in populated areas". Petraeus, rather than loosen these rules of engagement, tightened them. While McChrystal prohibited NATO forces

> from calling in air strikes or artillery fire on village compounds where the enemy might have been mixed in with civilians…Petraeus…expanded the ban on air strikes and artillery fire to all types of buildings, tree-lined areas and hillsides where it is difficult to distinguish who is on the ground (*ibid.*).

Other measures included a curb on small-arms fire that had yielded a steady trickle of fatalities at checkpoints and in nighttime raids on private residences. Issuing these directives, Petraeus wrote, "Every Afghan civilian death diminishes our cause" (*ibid.*).

It is rules of engagement such as these and the seeming prioritisation of Afghan lives, that has led some British soldiers and commentators to claim that British soldiers are now "risk[ing]…their lives" while out on patrol. British soldiers have been told "to shoot only if they are being attacked or are in 'imminent danger'" (Owen 2012). The 2012 BBC documentary, *Our War*, shows a British foot patrol nicknamed "Op Bait" by the soldiers embarking on it due to their role being to act as bait to tempt the Taliban into attacking them so they can then shoot back/call in air airstrike. The patrol's 'point man'[136] sums up their role as, "Our job was to get shot at" (*ibid.*). In response to such revelations the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is explicit about the priority of the mission: "We have always been very clear, as has ISAF, that our troops go to great lengths to avoid civilian casualties" (cited in Owen 2012). Alongside these increasingly strict rules of engagement, counterinsurgency guidelines continue to exhort soldiers "to be more respectful and learn about the nuances of Afghan culture to better connect with locals". Recommendations for achieving this include

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[136] The first and most exposed soldier in a combat military formation.

"drinking more tea, living among the people, admitting mistakes when things go wrong and using information as a weapon" (Motlagh 2012).

At the same time as abiding by these strict rules of engagement, NATO troops in Afghanistan encounter violence. Violence that tends to be represented as carried out by "a guerrilla force that doesn't have to play by the same rules" (*ibid.*). Sean Rayment, a journalist embedded with a British bomb disposal unit in Afghanistan, opens his book with one such example of 'outside the rules' guerrilla violence. In 2009 24-year-old Lance Corporeal James Fullarton – 'Fully' – was point man in a patrol and in control of the Vallon mine detector that would sense improvised explosive devices (IEDs) below the ground he and his fellow soldiers were about to walk. Despite his careful treading Fullarton activated an IED packed with 20kg of explosive. "The blast tossed Fully 40 ft through the air in a sudden, violent explosion, and when he landed his legs had gone" (Rayment 2011a: xv). With Fullarton gravely injured but still alive, his two best friends and fellow soldiers, Fusiliers Louis Carter, 18, and Simon Annis, 22, "inched their way towards their stricken commander". After lifting Fullarton's body onto a stretcher, Carter and Annis start moving towards the helicopter landing site. Moments later the two stretcher bearers detonated another massive IED, killing them both instantly (*ibid.*: xv-xvi).

Rayment details the aftermath of these explosions and the scene that confronted Staff Sergeant Kim Hughes, the head of the bomb hunting team attached to the company:

> The dead and injured – some six soldiers – were spread out over an area of 200 square metres. Uninjured soldiers were also trapped inside what was effectively a minefield… In the distance the sound of uncontrolled sobbing could be heard… The body closest to where Hughes was standing had no legs and only one arm. On the other side of the bomb crater lay another soldier, clearly dead, his legs gone. The two soldiers had been blown about 20 metres in opposite directions (*ibid.*: xvii-xviii).

In stories such as these, wartime violence – bloody, brutal, visceral violence – is something enacted *to* liberal warrior subjects rather than something enacted *by* them. That despite the weapons they carry, the training they have completed, and their engagement in war, liberal warriors appear as somewhat unmarked by the central currency of war – violence. Or rather, they remain unmarked by suggestions that they are themselves engaged in such activity. And it is this paradox, this tension, which will be the focus of this chapter. For while it is not profound to state – as Elaine Scarry does – that "war is injuring", and that

it "is too self-evident and massive ever to be directly contested" (1985: 63), liberal warriors, for the most part, are positioned as the victims of such brutality, and rarely understood as complicit in its perpetration and perpetuation. Involvement in the bloody and brutal violence of war has been located outside the borders that map a liberal warrior subjectivity. Indeed, if war were to be 'read' through the body of a liberal warrior, violence appears strangely absent. The multiple, messy, confused, brutal and unthinking ways that violence is carried out in war, and a liberal warrior's complicity in this, has been concealed, rendered *un*-visible – it is what *haunts* the figure and stories of its involvement in war. It is the revelation of this haunting through the performances of a liberal warrior that this chapter seeks.

Beginning with the Gulf War in the early 1990s and the apparent successes of the 'Revolution in Military Affairs' (RMA), the ways in which the brutality and bloodiness of war has been concealed is traced. While during the Gulf War the fetishisation of military weaponry and technology, alongside the increasing distances between target and operator, worked to construct a televised version of war that was bloodless and bodiless, in today's conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan it is the figure of a liberal warrior that has facilitated such *un*-visibility. It is through the construction of a 'softer' and 'gentler' militarised masculine subject that the brutality and barbarism of war has been concealed. Understood as a benign figure, well versed in the cultural traditions of the host country, and operating within strict rules of engagement, the visceral and brutal violence of previous conflicts has been exorcised from this figure. However, as has previously been shown, what has attempted to be expelled – in this case, the perpetration of and complicity in the barbarism of war – remains as a haunting presence, given notice to through the concrete materialisations of 'ghosts'. Taking the explosion of an IED and its aftermath as one such ghostly appearance, the blood, torn flesh and mutilated bodies offer a visceral reminder of the brutality and violence of war. Building on Cristina Masters' (2007) claim that death does not occur in the singular and that it can be 'read' in multiple ways, the chapter will go on to unpack three overlapping and interlinking readings of IED violence, as well as the borders such readings map, that ensure a liberal warrior remains disconnected from the obscenity and barbarism of war. Instead, such brutality is continually located outside borders mapping a liberal warrior subject, or it is something that is only ever endured, never perpetrated by, a liberal warrior. The borders that such readings rely on however, are never fixed, never stable, and the violent materialisation of a ghost visible in the aftermath of an IED strike passes through, appearing within boundaries demarcating a liberal warrior subjectivity. The chapter ends by arguing that it is in the constituting practices and the (re)iterating of borders of a softer and

gentler liberal warrior militarised masculinity that ghosts materialise, hauntings are revealed, and the barbarism, bloodiness and cruelty of warfare made possible.

CONCEALING BRUTALITY

The violence and brutality of war has been concealed by various means, and to greater and lesser extents, during numerous periods. Governmental practices of media censorship ranging from almost a complete blackout during the Falklands/Malvinas war to the 'embedded' nature of reporting in today's conflicts can be understood as one such practice of concealment. Similarly, Scarry points to the language surrounding warfare: that you can read or listen to many accounts of war "without encountering the acknowledgement that the purpose of the event described is to alter (to burn, to blast, to shell, to cut) human tissue" (Scarry 1985: 64). It was however, through the 'techno-warfare' of the Gulf War in the early 1990s and the apparent successes of the RMA that the absence of the brutality of war was perhaps most memorably (not) seen. For those watching the war unfold on the television screens back in the US or UK, the war appeared as

> a largely celebratory account of surgical strikes that accurately targeted and precisely destroyed enemy locations, without obvious casualties… Exacerbated by the fact that no body counts were publicized by the US military, the dead and injured completely failed to become figures of phenomenology in the mediascape of war (McSorley 2012: 48).

Margot Norris commented that this highly sanitised point of view had the effect of making Operation Desert Storm appear as "murderously destructive yet simultaneously corpseless" (cited in McSorley 2012: 48). Rhetoric surrounding the Gulf War – the 'technowar' – fetishised the military technologies on display, and made claims that the human body was being eclipsed "by the growing importance of machines in general and weapons in particular" (Gray 1997: 47). The signature motif of much western television reportage was not that of soldiers in desert fatigues, but "footage from the pilots' display-screens of their so-called 'smart' bombing raids" (McSorley 2012: 47-8). In this seemingly victimless and techno-fetishistic portrayal of war, the primary signifier of the brutality of war – the bloody, broken, lifeless human body – had been erased, leaving in its place a sterilised and bloodless war of machine-to-machine combat, destroyed buildings, and neutralised military infrastructure[137]. This evacuation of the body from war is central to the RMA. With its

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[137] It should however, be noted that numerous commentators and academics have produced work in the aftermath of the Gulf War that demonstrates its messiness, bloodiness and violence (for example, Zygmunt Bauman [2001] and Masters [2008]). Here I am not seeking to give a detailed explanation of the

conceptual origins found in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s[138], the RMA is a concept of warfare intimately tied to technological innovation, communications and organisational advancements. At its centre however, is the promise to fight present and future wars with the use of high technology and fewer ground troops (Gregory 2010: 160).

In some respects the contemporary conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have offered a continuation of military techno-scientific discourses associated with the RMA. For example, figures documenting the level of 'smart' technology used in the opening months of Operation Iraqi Freedom[139] note 23,000 guided bombs were dropped in comparison to the 9,500 dropped during the 'first' Gulf War, while "with the help of global positioning system satellite signals…eight hundred cruise missiles were launched, in comparison to 333 launched in Gulf War I" (Masters 2008: 100). Furthermore, with the introduction and increasing use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), popularly referred to as 'drones', the human body has been removed even further from the battlezone. British service personnel operating UAVs across Afghan airspace are not located tens, or even hundreds, of miles away in Camp Bastion, but are located either in Creech Air Force Base, Nevada, or RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire – some (respectively) 7,000 and 3,000 miles away from the targets they are killing. Specifically, much of what has continued from the rhetoric of the Gulf War to contemporary discourses on war is praise for, and expectations of, precision[140]. While the Gulf War provided the debut for 'smart', precision weaponry, this language is now largely associated with the use of UAVs, with one newspaper article reporting on the increased use of such weaponry by detailing the extent of this precision and accuracy, associating this with the safe-guarding of 'innocents':

> Since drone operators can view a target for hours or days in advance of a strike, they can identify terrorists more accurately than ground troops or conventional pilots. They are able to time a strike when innocents are not nearby and can even divert a missile after firing if, say, a child wanders into range (Shane 2012).

However, despite the high technology of the first few months of Operation Iraq Freedom and the increasing use of UAVs for both surveillance and strikes against 'terrorists'[141], the

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claims of the RMA, but demonstrate something of the different ways in which brutality and violence has been rendered *un*-visible in war in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.
[138] Marshal N.V. Ogarkov, Soviet Chief of the General Staff, proposed in a series of papers "a dramatic change in the future of war that amounted to a 'military-technical revolution'. The emphasis would be on pre-emptive strikes using a combination of new, non-nuclear precision weapon systems and information technology to reduce collateral damage and achieve a decisive military advantage" (Gregory 2010: 159-60).
[139] The 2003 US-UK invasion into Iraq.
[140] For a detailed discussion on what exactly is meant by 'precision' and what relation it has to how we think about war please see Maja Zehfuss (2010).
[141] It is of course not only terrorists who can be killed in these strikes. A report from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism claims an estimated 160 children have been killed in the CIA's 'drone war' in

human soldiering body is far more 'present' – or at least visible – in today's conflicts than the Gulf War. For as both the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan "bled into occupation and back into war, and as the insurgency multiplied and intensified, so the military was compelled to…implement a radically new 'population-centric' counterinsurgency doctrine" (Gregory 2010: 162), and one in which soldiers' bodies are central.

As my third chapter has stated, unlike the previous conflicts in Iraq and Kosovo, the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan cannot solely be fought from the skies. Instead, as engaged in a battle for 'hearts and minds', soldiers are expected to carry out regular foot patrols through towns and villages, engage with local communities through shuras, and live amongst the local population, aware of their customs and traditions. While the needs of counterinsurgency have meant that unlike the Gulf War human soldiering bodies have not been seemingly removed from the battlefield, the bloodiness and brutality of war continues to be concealed through other means.

Specifically, it is concealed, rendered *un*-visible, through the construction of a liberal warrior as a 'softer' and 'gentler' form of militarised masculinity. As my previous two chapters have demonstrated, this is a subjectivity that has emerged through discourses of 'population-centric' warfare, a shift away from kinetic force, and a focus on nation building and humanitarianism. It is a figure that appears in narratives of war that rarely make any mention of violence or brutality. For example, Leo Docherty, writing about his regiment's role in Helmand describes it as establishing

> [a]n 'inkspot' – a security haven…in which life can return to normal. If all goes to plan security, development and governance will go hand-in-hand in the push to reconstruct civil society. Success lies ultimately in…winning the hearts and minds of the civil population (2007: 56).

Like Petraeus' advice to drink more tea and use information as a weapon detailed at the beginning of this chapter, Docherty's discussion of establishing an 'inkspot' gives no indication to how such an inkspot would first appear. Indeed, what actions, what methods, might be used to create one, or how liberal warriors might go about gaining 'weaponised' information, is left completely absent. Depictions of liberal warriors may show fully armed combat soldiers, but their weapons are not fired, their bodies remain unbloodied, and they are rarely shown engaged in warfare. As the primary marker of what war 'is' and how it is

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Pakistan, a country not even at war with the US (Smith 2011), and in July 2011 the RAF confirmed the first civilian deaths from a UK-controlled UAV (Hopkins 2011). And this is to say nothing of often spurious ways individuals can come to be labelled as 'terrorists' and thus a 'legitimate' target.

proceeding to their populations back home, a liberal warrior ensures the barbarism and brutality of war is located outside its borders and rendered *un*-visible in war.

While the blood and violence of war was obscured and rendered *un*-visible during the Gulf War through the complete absence of bodies and the overwhelming presence of 'smart' technology, in today's conflicts, borders mapping a benign and disciplined liberal warrior have written such violence and brutality outside the realms of possibility of the subjectivity. Today, the iconic figures of battle are not cruise missiles that "turn…left at the traffic lights" (Ignatieff cited in Zehfuss 2010: 545), but are "gentle soldiers…actors in what the new US counterinsurgency doctrine describes as 'armed social work'" (Gregory 2010: 165). It is no longer that we cannot see the bloodiness and visceral 'reality' of warfare on a pilot's display screen, it is that the very bodies that are enacting the war appear disconnected to the simple statement that 'war is injuring', and that they may be implicated in that injuring. As Belkin and Carver point to, militarised masculinities may not just be "about violence", they may not only "advertise it…celebrate it", they may also be associated with its "erasure" (2012: 558-9).

EMERGENCE OF THE GHOST/CONCEALMENT OF HAUNTINGS

Placed 'outside' the borders that map a liberal warrior subjectivity, the possibility of, and complicity in, barbarism, brutality and cruelty in war is what haunts the subject. However, as has been shown, what is outside, what has attempted to be written out, cannot be done so completely or successfully. Hauntings are an integral, constituting part to that which they have been excluded from and attempts at upholding and reiterating the boundaries that deny them only ensure the eventual materialisation of ghosts that give notice to them.

And appear these ghosts do. Ghosts appear as body counts[142], as figures regarding the number and severity of injured troops[143], and as repatriated soldiers in body bags or with limbs missing and bodies disfigured. A ghost also materialises as an aspect of this haunting in the aftermath of an IED explosion. In the screaming, chaotic, bloody confusion that

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[142] For example the 179 British soldiers killed in Iraq between 2003 and 2011 (BBC 2011b) and the 444 British soldiers killed in Afghanistan since 2001 (MoD 2013).

[143] For example the 301 British soldiers "very seriously injured or wounded" and the 304 "seriously injured or wounded" (MoD 2013). Or figures from the Defence Analytical Services and Advice which studied MoD statistics and found 7, 13, 30, 55 and 76 cases of "traumatic or surgical amputation" of one or more limbs from British soldiers stationed in Afghanistan in the (inclusive) years 2006 and 2010 respectively (Cobain 2011).

follows the detonation of one of these devices, the visceral and violent 'reality' of warfare is laid bare. And it is this particular appearance of a ghost that I want to give more attention to.

IEDs, the main killer of British troops in Afghanistan, are manufactured on an industrial scale. "Made from pieces of wood, old batteries and home-made explosive, they are basic and deadly" (Rayment 2011a: 7). In some parts of Helmand in southern Afghanistan where the majority of British troops are based, illegal bomb factories can produce an IED every fifteen minutes, and it is estimated that a thousand new IEDs are planted every month in Afghanistan (Webb 2012). In 2011 the field hospital in Camp Bastion expected to treat at least one IED trauma victim every day and it is thought there is more than one IED for every British soldier serving in Helmand (Rayment 2011a: 7). The injuries sustained by soldiers after triggering these devices are life changing, and frequently life-ending. The shock wave that occurs after a soldier has stepped on an IED will instantly pulverize the flesh, bone, tissue and muscle of one or both of their lower limbs. In all likelihood, the force of the explosion will sever the nerves in one or both of their legs (Drury 2011: 159). With around seventy per cent of NATO casualties in Afghanistan resulting from IED detonations, injuries involving traumatic amputation below the waist have been labelled as the 'signature wound' (Drury 2011) of the conflict. For soldiers who trigger one of the larger IEDs (20kg of explosive or more – enough to take out a vehicle), the effect on the human body is devastating. Having safely just detonated a 30kg bomb, Gareth Wood, an Ammunition Technical Officer (ATO) responsible for defusing IEDs, comments, "If you stepped on something that big you would be vaporized… You would literally be blown to pieces, but the pieces would be very small. There wouldn't really be anything left to send home" (Rayment 2011a: 220). Witnessing an Iraqi bomb disposal operator accidently detonating one of these larger devices, Captain Liam Fitzgerald-Finch, describes the operator as turning to "pink mist" in the explosion that followed (Webb 2012).

It is not however, the complete evisceration of their bodies that many soldiers most fear. The force of an explosion will blow straight up into a soldier's genital and pelvic regions, carrying with it at supersonic speed tiny shards of rock and dirt. These will penetrate the soldier's torso at its most vulnerable area, between their front and back Kevlar body-armour flaps. Depending on the size of the explosive all or part of a soldier's genitals may be blown off by its detonation. The flying detritus such an explosion will send out will often lead to onerous penile, scrotal, testicular and rectal infections. These will require, at best, a temporary colostomy, or, at worst, full or partial amputations of the penis and/or testicles (Drury 2011: 159/70). In 2010 Sergeant Rick Clements suffered one such injury. Leading a

foot patrol in southern Afghanistan, Clements stepped on and detonated an IED. In this single step Clements lost both legs, severely damaged an arm, suffered terrible internal injuries, and lost both his testicles leaving him unable to have children or conduct a sexual relationship again (Rayment 2011b). A soldier talking to Rayment while embedded with a bomb disposal unit claims that "[t]he first thing everybody checks after they have been blown up is their wedding tackle" (Rayment 2011a: 67). Made from soft tissue and easily damaged or blown off in an IED blast, it is the prospect of losing their genitalia that for many soldiers holds the greatest fear. Rayment reports that many soldiers privately told him "that they would rather be dead than return to the UK without their testicles… There are some guys who who'd prefer to lose both legs, both arms and be blind but still have their nuts" (*ibid.*: 67). IEDs therefore not only have the potential to completely destroy the body of a liberal warrior, to render it "fingernail-size bits of flesh, bone and uniform cloth" (Drury 2011: 88), but to violently remove the ultimate body signifier of masculinity: the penis and testicles. As Drury puts it, male soldiers risk sacrificing "not just their mobility but also their masculinity for their country" (*ibid.*: 40/51).

However, while the spectacular and violent visibility of this ghost demands attention, and places the haunting brutality and obscenity of war in full view, this in itself does not guarantee a 'respectful' treating of this haunting. Cristina Masters writes that

> death is not simply a singular experience undergone by the 'I' who faces death – rather, death is experienced in the plural…explanations must be given and made meaningful to those who survive (individuals, communities, nations) and who also narrate. Thus, there are always multiple ways to 'read' the significance of death (2007: 46).

Applying these insights to the emergence of these spectacularly violent ghosts, that demand to be made sense of and demand explanation, these materialisations are also experienced in the plural. The materialisation itself does not 'have' or 'own' meaning. Ghosts, remember, are relational. They are capable of shifting and changing meanings already in place, they have the potential to distract us and take us elsewhere, but their own meaning can also be constructed, shifted and shaped. How then IEDs are understood and made sense of by those who suffer or witness their effects, and the militaries and nations associated with those that suffer their effects, constructs meaning/understanding of a ghost's appearance. I will argue that it is these specific ways that an IED explosion, a ghostly materialisation, is 'read' that prevents it from giving notice to and 'respecting' that which haunts. Instead, these readings ensure the violence and bloodiness of war rendered so viscerally visible in the aftermath of an IED explosion remains disconnected from a liberal warrior. It remains something a liberal warrior is only ever subjected to, never complicit in. In short, these

readings ensure that while a ghost has materialised and demands attention, the haunting it points towards is not treated respectfully, remaining instead concealed, obscured and *un-*visible. I argue that such readings are achieved through three interrelated practices, which all involve boundary-marking, and are discussed below in turn.

EMERGENCE WITHOUT RELATIONALITY

Firstly, in readings of an IED explosion, incidents tend to emerge without any relationality: as singular and unprovoked events. The 'Roll of Honour' of service personnel killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan available on the MoD website begins each entry with the soldier's name, an expression of sadness or 'deep regret', and their cause of death (explained in the barest of ways)[144]. For example, "Lance Corporal Duane Groom was killed in action when his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in the Nahr-e Saraj district of Helmand province" (MoD 2012a); Corporal Palin was "guiding a patrol" when he was "killed by an improvised explosive device" (MoD 2011). When detail is given of what the soldier was doing prior to their cause of death, this too is brief, functional. For example, Sapper Connor Ray "was involved in a search and clearance operation in the Nad 'Ali district of central Helmand… The aim of the mission was to clear a compound previously used by insurgents, allowing the local population to safely return to the area". It was during this operation that Ray was seriously injured in an IED strike. Ray was evacuated to Camp Bastion and then back to the UK, where he died in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham (MoD 2012b). Media stories, dependent on information either released by the MoD or from embedded reporters (who also need to 'clear' their reports with the MoD[145]), take similar formats. Even books within the 'TiC-lit' genre, with room to expand on the context of an event, give only brief preludes before the inevitable explosion. Frequently – and as this chapter does – such an incident provides the 'start-point' for the rest of a story: an ambush/a day-long battle/a death/a recovery.

A term that appears frequently in this singular reporting is 'routine': a "routine foot patrol" (MoD 2010); a "routine joint patrol" (MoD 2007); a "routine patrol" (MoD n.d.l). To be 'routine' is to be ordinary, everyday, monotonous. It brings to mind habitual practices and uneventful behaviour. It does not bring to mind associations of violence, brutality, cruelty or barbarism. The word 'routine' invites us not to question what exactly was

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[144] Maja Zehfuss (2009) writes about the formula used by the MoD in online obituaries of British fatalities, and the ways in which killed soldiers have their lives and loss construed.
[145] Official reasoning for this practice is to ensure the 'operational security' of the mission is not compromised.

happening because by its very nature 'routine' is ordinary and unworthy of such attention. As such, the word 'routine' should arouse the feminist curiosity discussed in my introduction, for this word is very effective at ensuring associations of violence remain absent from our understanding of liberal warriors and what they are 'routinely' doing. Soldiers killed or injured in IED explosions tend not to be engaged in a firefight with the enemy, but will be walking through a village or town, or driving between bases. It is this aspect of an IED – that it can seemingly strike at any moment, anywhere – that has led to it being labelled a "powerful…psychological weapon" (Rayment 2011a: 126). However, by naming these soldiering activities 'routine', what the soldiers are doing prior to an IED strike – walking, driving – becomes disconnected from the context in which they find themselves and carry out that (routine) activity. The context is of course a warzone. Soldiers are not just rambling through the Afghan countryside, admiring its vastness, nor are they gently strolling though the villages and hamlets, exploring the local shops and businesses. Soldiers are on *patrol*. They drive in convoy, they walk in formation, they wear combat body armour, and carry weaponry capable of destroying close to anything that comes in their path. And while these patrols may be 'routine' inasmuch as they occur weekly, daily, hourly, with the same checks and the same precautions taken each time, what is routine in a warzone, is very different to what is routine elsewhere or at other times. It is after all far less common for someone walking around the UK, carrying out their daily routine, to be severely injured or killed by an explosive device.

It is this lack of context that affords IEDs their absence of relationality. IEDs and the injuries and deaths sustained by them are presented outside the context of war. While those reading or hearing the news back in the UK may 'know' that British soldiers are engaged in a war in Afghanistan, when it is reported soldiers are killed and injured while on foot patrol, driving, on a search and clearance mission, or other such 'routine' activities, it does not appear as if British soldiers are *fighting* a war or engaged in any of its brutality or violence. As such, when violence comes in the shape of an IED explosion it appears as even more shocking and cruel because of it. That soldiers injured or killed may have been walking back to base having engaged in a deadly firefight or had called in coordinates for an air strike is not part of the story we are told. Drawing on Judith Butler's (2010) work on 'frames' of war, Maja Zehfuss writes that in obituaries of British soldiers killed during Operation TELIC in Iraq available on the MoD website, "[v]iolence does not seem to be part of this frame". As such, this makes "death, when it comes, a tragedy" (2009: 18). Similarly, while IEDs are frequently described as a weapon of "asymmetric warfare" (Rayment 2011a: 126), the opposing side of that asymmetry is seldom acknowledged. Just as IEDs do not injure

and kill in a vacuum, nor do they emerge in one. It is our armoured tanks, our long-range missiles, our pilotless bombs, and our multi-billion pound defence industry that has produced this "adaptive and inventive" (*ibid*.: 59) weapon. And yet our weapons remain absent – or at least quiet and unfired – in discussions around IEDs[146].

This relation-less reading of an IED operates to mark borders between those bodies that are subjected to wartime violence – liberal warriors – and those (absent) bodies that perpetrate it – insurgents who remain absent from the event itself, but whose presence lingers in the barbarism of the violence. In these readings of IED incidents, liberal warriors appear as injured rather than injuring, while the cruelty and brutality of the insurgent is transferred and re-inscribed onto the IED and its destructive power (this will be unpacked in more detail below). Borders separating these two figures also operate to (re)trace the contours of a liberal warrior, reiterating and rearticulating the subjectivity as benign and benevolent with the capacity for and complicity in wartime violence continually deferred and placed outside its limits.

Military Orientalism

It is not however, just that the violence and brutality of an IED explosion is read as a singular event, its perpetration outside the realms of possibility of a liberal warrior. The violence itself – and those who enact it – is understood and constituted through colonial logics as cruel, barbaric, somehow beyond the pale of 'ordinary' or 'regular' warfare. Boundaries are marked not just around and between those who perpetrate violence and those who are subjected to it, but also between different 'types' of violence and the ways in which it is enacted. Boundaries that suggest that the tactics of warfare liberal warriors are exposed to are fundamentally different from those they deploy themselves. Derek Gregory looks at the ways in which the rhetoric surrounding the "new wars" of the 'West' and 'East' has worked to represent 'our' new wars as those fought by professional armies and high-

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[146] Throughout this chapter I will deploy the term 'our' without critically engaging with the problematic assumptions concealed within its use. In her article 'Subjectivity and Vulnerability', Maja Zehfuss, unpacks the rhetorical 'we' invoked in George W. Bush and Tony Blair's statements at the beginning of the Iraq war, demonstrating that "this 'we' is only produced as it is spoken of", and that it assumed that a "'them' and 'us' remain logically separate" (2007: 60). While I accept that my own use of the term 'our' interpellates an assumed (and problematic) collectivity, the 'our' – and by its possessive extension, 'we' – I am trying to point to is those who observe or experience war from 'outside' the military. Those who predominantly hear about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the soldiers involved in them, from reading British newspapers, watching news stories and military documentaries, reading soldier memoirs and visiting exhibitions. Those of us – myself included – who are unlikely to ever witness, first hand, the actual or 'real' violence of warfare or combat, those of us who are likely to only ever be exposed to it via, what Judith Butler (2010) calls, the 'frames of war'.

precision weaponry, with an emphasis on international law, and violences directed towards combatants. Meanwhile, 'their' new wars are fought using improvised weapons, are outside international law, and engage in indiscriminate killings (Gregory 2010: 170). Oppositions such as these

> sustain an imaginative geography in which 'our' wars are construed as humane wars because they are fought within the space of the modern – the space of Reason, Science and Law[147]…'their' wars are inhumane, even non-human ('feral') because they are located outside the modern: driven by Passion, Tradition and Criminality (*ibid.*: 170).

Patrick Porter has also taken up this assumption of some form of essential difference or demarcation between 'Western' and 'Eastern' warfare in his study of military Orientalism. Porter surveys a range of what he calls "metacultural" military histories and studies of counterinsurgency, where culture is pitched not just at the level of the nation-state, but across transnational civilisations. In these accounts culture is treated almost as destiny, with Eastern warfare separated from Western "as an unbroken strategic tradition that unites dispersed societies from Sun Tzu's[148] China, medieval Arabia, modern Turkey, to the Arab and Islamic insurgencies of today" (2009: 11). Surveying the literature of a number of 'metacultural' academics, Porter demonstrates how within such writing 'Oriental' warfare is framed as "different and apart from European warfare", specifically with regard to its reliance on "evasion, delay and indirectness" (Keegan cited in Porter 2009: 11). Narratives such as these claim that whereas those in the West have "historically preferred direct battle fought without guile to smash the enemy…the 'Islamic' way of war chose standoff weapons, deceit and attacking enemy cohesion" (Porter 2009: 11). The IED as the standoff weapon par excellence has become the (low) technological embodiment of this particular Orientalist discourse, viewed as a tactic born not out of a response to shifting strategic circumstances and in relation to the forms of warfare deployed by NATO forces, but rather the inevitable product "of a long-term Arab-Islamic culture" (*ibid.*: 65).

Reactions to and descriptors of IED violence by soldiers who are exposed to them, and journalists and aid agencies reporting on their impact reveals how their violence is understood as obscene and operating outside the bounds of acceptability. Colonial and Orientalist logics introduced in my previous chapter that worked to mark the bodies of the 'Othered' local population as barbaric, sly and uncivilised, now remap such characteristics

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[147] Here we can see a direct link back to ideas of the Cartesian subject so integral to a liberal warrior.
[148] An ancient Chinese military general who is believed to have written *The Art of War*, a book on Chinese military strategy.

onto the IED and the violence it produces. Rayment describes the tactics of the Taliban in laying IEDs as "ruthless and inventive" (2011a: 43). IEDs are often laid close to one another so that soldiers who go to the aid of an injured friend – like Fusiliers Louis Carter and Simon Annis at the beginning of this chapter – will also become casualties. It is reported that ambushes in the aftermath of an IED attack are a common occurrence, with Rayment describing the practice of attacking the "casevacs" (casualty evacuations) as "a popular Taliban sport" (*ibid*.: 229-30) [149]. The ATO Gareth Wood explains to Rayment,

> The Taliban know how we react when we have a contact [injury] – they have seen it. A guy gets blown up and loses both legs – there's a lot of panic and shouting, the adrenaline is pumping, he's close to death, and at the forefront of everyone's mind is getting him out of the killing zone and back to the HLS [helicopter landing site]. The Taliban know this so they target the route to the HLS (*ibid*.: 170).

Rayment reports that it is this "blind loyalty" of British troops that is exploited "with the consequence that those who have rushed to help a stricken comrade have ended up as casualties themselves" (*ibid*.: 68). Such tactics are understood as "brutal and cowardly" (*ibid*.: 107), and unpalatable to those soldiers whom, according to a British colonel, far from targeting the injured, tend to their wounds. Recalling a scene during one operation, Colonel Stuart Tootal observes a British Army medic tending to a wounded Taliban fighter; "our doctor applied morphine, re-aligned one of his shattered bones and checked the bleeding". Tootal reflects that despite the addition of this wounded insurgent being a "burden during the extraction…his best chance of survival was with us and the proper medical care he would receive at Bastion" (Tootal 2009: 74).

Further tactics have led British troops in Afghanistan to declare that the conflict is no longer a "stand-up fight", but "a dirty, nasty little war" (Rayment 2011a: 140-1). For example, it is reported that IEDs are now being constructed with little or no metal count, making these devices almost impossible to pick up with the Vallon metal detectors. Troops are now increasingly having to rely on, what they call, the "Mk 1 eyeball" (*ibid*.: 7)[150], in the hope of spotting a ground sign of a device. In Afghanistan, the Taliban enlist the help of children in their use of IEDs. In order to evade detection, children are often recruited to bury the devices (*ibid*.: 73), while Wood, in another conversation with Rayment, recalls a small child who "had been smiling and waving" at a group of British soldiers he was with, then pulled a command wire and nearly blew them up (*ibid*.: 154). Faced with these tactics,

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[149] To represent the targeting of rescuers as a tactic solely used by the Taliban and one rejected by NATO troops is not however, completely accurate; US and UK 'drone' tactics deploy 'double-tap' attacks in which rescuers aiding victims of an initial drone attack are explicitly targeted (see Greenwald 2012).
[150] Short for 'Mark One Eyeball': military slang meaning the use of unaided eyesight to spot something rather than relying on equipment.

liberal warriors are portrayed as no longer pitched against an honourable enemy, but instead face one that they can't see, can't shoot back at, and can't detect.

It is not just the tactics used by those deploying IEDs that is understood as uncivilised, the construction and operation of the devices themselves is marked by crudeness. The circuit at the centre of an IED which is connected to a detonator is described by ATO, Staff Sergeant Karl Ley, as something "an 11-year-old boy could easily knock together" (*ibid*.: 59), while bomb disposal operator, Nick Handy, who served in Northern Ireland claims that "the 'build quality' of bombs in Afghanistan is much poorer than those made by the IRA [Irish Republican Army]". Rearticulating the obscenity of both the insurgent and the device, Handy states insurgents taking shortcuts in the devices' construction make them far more dangerous than those made by the IRA. "In Northern Ireland the terrorist didn't want to die just as much as we didn't want to die…whereas in Afghanistan the insurgent doesn't care about his own life. Any manipulation of the wire could kill you" (Webb 2012). An IED's crudeness and unpredictability however, does not impinge upon its effectiveness as Ley makes clear:

> I wouldn't say the bombs are bodged – but they're not far from it. But that doesn't matter. They are still very effective and they do the job. They don't have to be state-of-the-art – quality control is minimal – but the beauty of these things is that they work. You can leave a pressure-plate IED in the ground for a month, maybe more, and it can still kill" (cited in Rayment 2011a: 61).

Such low-quality, rudimentary devices inevitably lead to haphazard effects. Continually labelled as 'indiscriminate'[151], the UN has stated that IEDs are responsible for 41% of Afghan civilians killed during the conflict (Rogers and Chalabi 2013), with 967 civilian deaths and 1,586 civilian injuries recorded in 2011 (UNAMA 2012: 16). Detonated when walked or driven over with a trigger weight of more than 10kg, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan "takes the position that these IEDs function as anti-personnel landmines, and are indiscriminate as they cannot distinguish between a civilian and military objective, making their use illegal under international humanitarian law" (*ibid*.: 16). Like other practices deemed illegal in war – for example, the use of chemical and biological weapons – the IED has been deemed as 'outside' the acceptable bounds of warfare, as something obscene in relation to liberal warriors, and their liberal states, who fight honourably and honestly.

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[151] IEDs however, are not always as "totally indiscriminate" (Rayment 2011a: 38) as those within the military and those reporting on them frequently claim. Echoing the tactics of NATO troops, at times the Taliban will arm devices only during certain parts of the day, or remotely turn a device off if a NATO patrol does not venture close by in order to "reduce their collateral damage" as, like NATO, "they need to keep the local population on their side in areas they control" (*ibid*.: 60).

Unlike the crude and indiscriminate IED, the 'dirty' and 'nasty' tactics used in deploying it, and its brutal and devastating effects on the soldiering (and civilian) bodies that trigger them, violences deployed by liberal warriors are represented as qualitatively different to those they are exposed to. Liberal warriors, as it has already been noted in this thesis, are not peacekeepers. They are combat-trained troops who carry weaponry and are fully capable (and willing) to engage in close combat with the enemy should they need to. However, reading IED violence in and through a discourse of military Orientalism means a border is mapped between the 'acceptable' violence of a liberal warrior, and the barbarism and brutality of an IED – violence that is understood as 'beyond the pale' of comprehension.

In a 'conversations' piece for the *International Feminist journal of Politics* (IFjP), Terrell Carver in discussion with Aaron Belkin remarks "that the stereotypical version of militarized masculinities approved for release…tames and sanitizes it [violence] through symbolism". Carver goes on to state that this symbolism works through representations of militarised masculinities that show only "clean uniforms, unmarked bodies (and, so it seems, untroubled minds) and weapons that aren't firing at all". While wounded or dead people may occasionally be shown on our television screens, "we're seldom if ever shown any identifiable killing and maiming in real time up close" (Belkin and Carver 2012: 561). Building on this, I would claim it is this 'sanitisation' of (militarised masculine) violence, this erasure of the brutality and bloodiness of it, which allows us to read the violence of liberal warriors as acceptable, and thus as distinct from the unacceptable, indiscriminate violence of IED warfare. While the effects of IED violence are clearly visible in the increasing numbers of disabled veterans and (our) body counts of war, the potential brutality of violence perpetrated by a liberal warrior remains largely *un*-visible. When footage of fighting appears on our television screens we see bullets fired, but never what they hit; we see explosions take place, but at distance. Weaponry is made sense of in a highly technologized language, or what Carver refers to as "some de-natured Orwellian way" (*ibid.*: 561). The rifles liberal warriors carry boast "reliability…versatility and ergonomic design" (MoD n.d.m); the rockets contain "advanced computer technology" and have "unsurpassed accuracy" (MoD n.d.n); and the "primary use" of missiles in Afghanistan "is against fixed positions, bunkers and other buildings" (MoD n.d.o). Nowhere in these descriptions is there recognition of the bodies that such weapons will be pointed towards and aimed at. Nowhere is there recognition that their sole purpose is to maim and kill o/Other(ed) bodies. Nowhere is there recognition that these, like an IED, will have a devastating effect on those it comes into

(more accurate) contact with and that these weapons will burn, blast, tear and eviscerate. And all of this is compounded and underlined with the 'knowledge' we already have that as liberal warriors these are soldiers who are in control of their violence, know when to deploy it and when to hold it back, and operate within strict rules of engagement.

Through these readings, a boundary is marked between the acceptable, necessary violence of a liberal warrior, and that of the barbaric cruelty of an IED, readings that position an IED as devious, cowardly, and an obscene tactic of war. The weaponry and tactics of a liberal warrior meanwhile are sanitised through a technologized language, a promise of reliability and accuracy, and the erasure of the human bodies they point towards. A liberal warrior is then once again disconnected from any possible complicity in the brutality of war, this remaining concealed, *un*-visible and haunting.

'KNOWING' A LIBERAL WARRIOR

The two readings of the materialisation of a ghost detailed above may not deny the brutality, chaos and messiness of war – this is after all "too self-evident and massive ever to be directly contested" (Scarry 1985: 63) – but such readings do ensure a liberal warrior remains disconnected from it. Specifically, a liberal warrior is not considered complicit in the violence, whether through the locating of a liberal warrior continually in the position of the victim, or through the reading of violence subjected to them as particularly obscene. The haunting revealed has not been treated 'respectfully', it has not troubled, disrupted or rendered uncertain borders that map a liberal warrior as a more benign militarised masculine subjectivity. Both readings however, are informed by, and rely on, those witnessing the materialisation of a ghost as 'knowing' a liberal warrior, for it is through the body of a liberal warrior that we understand and read warfare. It is through our casualties, our trauma, our body counts and our injured soldiers that we come to understand war – we remain the referent. It warrants therefore a return to this figure. An unpacking of how boundaries are mapped and how we come to 'know' a liberal warrior so as to ensure their complicity in the violence and brutality of war appears as inconceivable.

In my previous chapter, when ghosts materialised it was upon the bodies of 'Others' that they were rendered visible. This time however, it is a liberal warrior's body that becomes the site of their appearance. Unlike bodies that are presented and known to us predominantly as 'not us', as different and Other(ed), a liberal warrior's body is 'known' to us. Indeed, I would claim that emerging in line with a contemporary liberal warrior

subjectivity, and integral to it, is an increasingly intimate knowledge of who a liberal warrior 'is'. Soldiering figures are presented to us in ever more personal and personalising ways and we come to know them not just as faceless fighters but also as husbands, fathers, family members, best friends and colleagues. We come to know not just their regiment, their rank and their job within the military, but their family ties, what they look like, and their hopes for the future. Patrick Hennessey reflects on this, commenting, "War has become highly personalized". Hennessey understands this to a certain extent as "a question of scale"; that "it is far easier to report and mourn single deaths than hundreds, easier to comprehend the loss of three young men in a vehicle than the decimation of whole battalions". However, Hennessey also points to what he understands as a "changed society" and one that is "hungrier and hungrier for minute and trivial detail about the lives of everyone else" (2012: 8). It is however, not the lives of 'everyone else' that the public is hungry for. There is seemingly very little public appetite for 'minute and trivial' details about enemy fighters, ANA soldiers or the people of Afghanistan – such 'hunger' appears to be reserved for bodies that look more like our own. This interest, or 'hunger', has been fuelled by an ever-increasing amount of military-based entertainment[152], 'solutions'[153] and charities[154], alongside the concomitant stories and narratives that come with them. Paying attention to one particular example of liberal warriors becoming 'known' to us, I'm now going to turn my attention towards an exhibition at the London Imperial War Museum (IWM) titled *War Story*. Running as a rolling programme from October 2011 until 18 December 2012, *War Story* was part of a series of events, exhibitions and broadcasts that marked the decade British troops had been stationed in Afghanistan.

A Ministry of Defence-supported initiative, *War Story* sought to collect material relating to the war in Afghanistan. Its self-stated aim was "to record Operation Herrick from the perspective of British Service Personnel and their families" (IWM n.d.). Serving soldiers were invited to register to the project online and contribute materials via uploading digital photos, videos and emails, as well as suggesting other possible donations. The *War Story* website tells potential contributors the kinds of things they would like to hear about: "What was your accommodation (PB/FOB [patrol base/forward operating base]) like – how did

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[152] Evidenced by the proliferation in 'TiC-lit' and military-based documentaries (for example, the 2012 BBC documentary *Our War: 10 Years in Afghanistan*) and reality TV programmes such as the 2007 ITV series, *Guarding the Queen*.
[153] For example, the drafting in of military personnel as security during the 2012 London Olympics, drafting in ex-military personnel to work with disadvantaged or 'problem' school children (see Walker 2012), and the increasing popularity of military-style fitness 'boot camps'.
[154] While the increasing visibility (and celebrity) of the British Legion's annual 'Poppy Campaign' is of note here, *Help for Heroes* (www.helpforheroes.org.uk), a military charity established in 2007, is particularly prominent.

you sleep, eat and wash?"; "What did you think of your uniform and equipment?"; "What was your day-to-day job?"; "How did you stay in touch with family?" The website also lists a number of items the museum would be interested in receiving to exhibit including: emails to and from family and friends; poems; diaries/journals; your iPhone/iPod play list; video diaries; photographs; and books read (*ibid.*). The display takes the form of a free-standing structure set among the permanent exhibits in the atrium, and stories and objects are grouped

> around broad themes reflecting the general experiences of those deployed. Starting with first impressions with Afghanistan, the display covers living conditions, keeping in touch with home, getting out on the ground and the experiences of loss and remembrance. Visitors are encouraged to explore these themes in more depth by browsing galleries of photographs and videos submitted by service personnel and by listening to interviews in which they describe their experiences (Mason 2011).

One of the most striking parts of the exhibition is "an arresting series of photographic portraits of some of the participants in the War Story project" (*ibid.*) which adorn the top level of the museum, consisting of an internal balcony that circles the main atrium. Each portrait is reproduced in A1 size (24x33 inch), and book-ending the photographs are two boards giving a small amount of information about them. These boards tell us that while the portraits were originally intended as purely an administrative record of participants, they "demanded reassessment" (War Story 2011-2).

> The subjects were all photographed against a clean white background and, where possible, without berets or insignia identifying their units. All of the images were composed and processed in exactly the same way. An approach that was intended to produce consistency and conformity has instead highlighted the variety and individuality of the subjects. Their direct gaze into the camera lens – and towards the viewer – is unsettling yet intriguing. It invites us to wonder about the nature of their experiences and offers us a glimpse of the person behind the uniform (*ibid.*).

That these portraits reveal the 'individuality' of service personnel is a reiterated claim. Amanda Mason, *War Story's* curator, wrote in *The Telegraph* that they revealed the "variety and individualism of the subjects" (2011), while Richard Ash, one of the Museum's photographers involved in the project states, "They are just like you or me. They are your brother, your dad, your sister, your best friend, your husband, your wife" (War Story 2011-2). It is this focus on the individual; the personal items gathered; Mason's assertion that "individual experience is at the heart of the display" (Mason 2011); and the interactive nature of the exhibition, that make *War Story* a personal and personalising exhibition.

Indeed, despite its name – *War Story* – this is an exhibition that is far more about soldiers than war (if the two could be neatly separated). Specifically, it is about *our* soldiers, and not as fighters or killers, but as individuals: as your brother, your dad, your best friend. It is an exhibition that familiarises and presents the visitor with intimate knowledge of the service personnel involved, and, by extension, members of the British armed forces as a whole. We can read their letters and emails home; listen to the songs they listened to; see the copy of the book they were reading; and watch on film as one soldier completes a rubix cube. We hear their first impressions of Afghanistan, what they did during their time off, and what was hardest about being away from home and loved ones. Soldiers are taken away from the "militarized, technologically enhanced, uniformed body" (Maltby and Thornham 2012: 41), which remains the dominant visual grammar of soldiering, and towards instead a humanness and familiarity that visitors can see in themselves and in their own loved ones. Through the artefacts on display, the portraits of unmarked bodies, and the personal mementos soldiers have donated, visitors come to 'know' the soldiers, and in turn 'know' the war (as read through the body of a liberal warrior and their experiences).

War Story as a way of making liberal warriors 'known' to the public is therefore another mode that borders are marked. When liberal warriors are personalised through their familial relations, their personal reflections and mundane everyday items, they are mapped not as fighting and killing soldiers, but become familiar to those visiting the museum as individuals, as everyday, 'routine' people. Indeed, a great deal of effort appears to have taken place in the exhibition at representing and constructing these soldiers as something other, something more, than bodies intimately and inescapably entangled in relations of violence. When I visited the exhibition in November 2012, violence – the central currency of war – was notable by its (apparent) absence. It was what Avery Gordon might call a "seething absence" (2008: 200): something that "makes its mark by being there and not there at the same time" (*ibid.*: 6). Like the liberal warrior itself, violence haunted the exhibition. When violence did appear (as a ghost) it emerged either as that which is inflicted on the bodies of liberal warriors – for example, in a talking heads video with Andy Reid, a soldier who became a triple amputee during his tour of duty in Afghanistan; a crudely constructed wooden cross in the 'Loss' section memorialising Lieutenant Mark Evison who was fatally wounded by a bullet in 2009 – or as what Carver refers to as "symbolic" (Belkin and Carver 2012: 560) violence. For example, helmetcam footage of soldiers firing their weapons but no depiction of what or who the bullets connect with. For Carver, the violence signified by any of these ghostly appearances is "*non-taboo…* Violence in this mode is essential to fiction, movies, TV drama, pictures,

prose journalism and all the vicarious things we know about. But real violence as it happens is erased" (*ibid.*: 560, emphasis in original). In this exhibition, 'real' violence – brutal, bloody, visceral, fleshy 'real' violence – is mapped outside a liberal warrior. A liberal warrior may experience the effects of this real violence (the dead soldier, the IED victim), but he will not engage in it or be complicit in its perpetration.

'Reading' the ghost and 'ghosting' the haunting

Concealed through the construction of a 'softer' and 'gentler' militarised masculine subjectivity in the figure of a liberal warrior, violence, brutality and barbarism in war have been rendered *un*-visible. However, in the aftermath of an IED explosion – amongst the chaos, blood and mutilated bodies – the violence, brutality and cruelty of war is rendered viscerally visible. The aftermath is the ghost that signals to this haunting presence of violence and brutality. However, the ways in which this ghostly materialisation is 'read' and understood prevents 'respectful' treating of this haunting, denying its connection with a liberal warrior. Firstly, the ghost emerges, the IED explosion appears, without any relationality. That a liberal warrior exposed to this violence is carrying weaponry, engaging in firefights with enemy combatants and calling in airstrikes is not discussed. The context of war, and with it the symbiotic relationship between violence inflicted and violence endured, is removed from the reading. Secondly, read through colonial and Orientalist logics, the violence of an IED is understood as qualitatively different to that which a liberal warrior may engage in. While a liberal warrior may engage in highly technologized violence which is sanitised and rendered 'acceptable' through the language of accuracy and the erasure of the bodies it is directed at, as low-tech, indiscriminate and a cowardly way to fight, an IED is read as an obscene tactic of war, as 'beyond the pale' of acceptability. Finally, given that it is through the body of a liberal warrior that we understand war and the violence that takes place within it, how we 'know' that figure is integral to our reading of wartime violence. Taking the IWM's *War Story* exhibition as one way through which we come to 'know' a liberal warrior, the exhibition personalises and familiarises the figure, locating violence and brutality in war as something that is either outside or disconnected from the subject, or as that which is endured by the subject.

All these readings interact and interlock, and all involve the mapping of borders: between those who perpetrate wartime violence and those who are subjected to it; between acceptable and obscene 'types' of violence; and around a personalised and

familiarised subject. Crucially, all of these border-mapping practices operate to locate a liberal warrior in a position of *innocence*, a position integral to a liberal warrior's constitution. Just as my previous chapter detailed the ways in which the subject has been unhinged from the bloody and brutal past of colonialism in its contemporary production, so too must a liberal warrior be understood as innocent in relation to the bloodiness and brutality in war. Violence and barbarism in war is continually read as 'outside' a liberal warrior; as something the subject is never complicit in, only ever exposed to.

Reading the materialisation of a ghost in this way however, does not 'respect' the haunting it gives notice to. It does not acknowledge and give recognition to the transformative possibilities a haunting offers, rather, it 'ghosts' and renders *un*-visible that which haunts all over again (Gordon 2011: 3). Reading in this way ignores the effects of liberal warriors' weaponry, erases the bodies it is aimed at, and sanitises representations of their violence. While reading the ghost differently will not make a soldier's death or injury any less tragic or upsetting for the soldier involved and their family, friends and colleagues, it does open up the possibility of understanding the explosion and its aftermath as a ghostly materialisation that gives notice to hauntings of brutality and barbarism *within* a liberal warrior. To view the blood, the severed limbs and chaotic scenes as not something liberal warriors are only subjected to, but may also be implicated in. To put this violence in context, understand it in relation to war, in relation to a liberal warrior, and the symbiotic relationship between those violences a soldier endures in war – blown off limbs, disfigured bodies, eviscerated flesh – and those they perpetrate. Barbarism in war does not after all merely haunt a liberal warrior, such hauntings are integral to its constitution and (re)enactment.

RESPECTING THE HAUNTING

How then can we pay attention to the ghost in such a way that acknowledges and 'respects' the haunting? In what ways can the violence and aftermath of an IED explosion be 'read' that alerts us to hauntings of barbarism and brutality within the figure of a liberal warrior? The appearance of a ghost is distracting. In the blood, torn flesh and eviscerated bodies in the aftermath of an IED strike, we are (temporarily) preoccupied away from stories of counterinsurgency that talk about nation building, the mentoring and advising of Afghan troops, and of shuras conducted with village elders. This visceral materialisation of a ghost reminds those who witness it that war is indeed violent, bloody and brutal. However, while this disrupts stories of counterinsurgency as a 'new' type of warfare – one that is less violent

and centred around humanitarianism – how such violence is 'read' allows a liberal warrior subjectivity to remain intact. Indeed, as the sections above demonstrate, while the materialisation of a ghost offers the opportunity to reveal hauntings that disrupt and render fragile a liberal warrior, what ends up taking place is the (re)inscription of borders that attempt to expel and render *un*-visible the hauntings. These readings therefore work to (re)articulate a liberal warrior as benign, controlled and humanised, even when the physical body upon which the subjectivity is written has been destroyed.

Aaron Belkin, in both his book (2012) and his *IFjP* 'conversation' with Carver, argues that militarised masculinities are not just sites where boundary lines get drawn and "the taboo/obscene/abjected" get suppressed, but also where such distinguishing boundary lines get conflated and confused (Belkin and Carver 2012: 560). Belkin writes, "Just as military practices have established masculinity in opposition to the unmasculine, these ostensible oppositions have been conflated at the same time" (Belkin 2012: 34). For example, and drawing on last chapter's discussion of penetration, Belkin points to the way in which "at the same time that male, military bodies are not supposed to be penetrated by bullets, penises or anything else, [American] military culture often involves the use of male-male rape for socialization and initiation". Thus, "penetration can conjure up multiple meanings in military culture". While penetration of the male, military body can be "constructed as the ultimate taboo and abjected state of being", it can also be constructed as "something that the troops must endure…that he is strong enough to take it like a man" (Belkin and Carver 2012: 560). As my discussions on homosociability and homosexuality, and discipline and uncontrollability, have demonstrated, differences in military culture have been simultaneously clear inasmuch as the former is clearly valorised over and above the latter, "but also difficult if not impossible to discern" (Belkin 2012: 34). Boundaries that separate differences and demarcate seemingly oppositional binaries have been shown not to be hard and fixed, but soft, porous and 'ghostly'.

Thus, boundary lines drawn and (re)iterated through the readings above are never secure. They too are soft and porous, liable to have those things that have been excluded return to haunt. Ghosts that give notice to these hauntings will materialise within these borders. Such ghosts may not have the spectacular violence of representations of IED explosions and their aftermath. They may appear more fleetingly, with less announcement – like ghosts that materialise in the gradual growing of hair during a tour of duty, the marching off of a drill square during basic training, or the homoeroticism of informal barrack living. They will appear in the 'symbolic' violence that Carver spoke about – explosions viewed

from a distance, the number of rounds of ammunition fired, and the technologized language surrounding British troops' weaponry. They will appear in the descriptions we hear of battles fought (and normally won) and on the bodies of soldiers festooned in combat body armour, belts of ammunition and automatic weapons. We have seen already however, that these ghosts, materialising within the borders mapped around a liberal warrior and their (re)enactment in war, are not read as giving notice to the bloodiness and brutality of war. It is then by returning to the spectacular violence of an IED explosion and its aftermath, and by reading it differently that the full disruptive power of these more fleeting, 'quieter' ghosts can be revealed and the hauntings they signify respected and revealed.

The distracting and disrupting power of an IED strike and its aftermath is the blood, the panic, the fear and the chaos of the attack. This is what grabs our attention and this is what reminds us of the always already presence of the brutality of war. In order to treat this haunting 'respectfully' we must not only be distracted by the violent effects of an IED – the ghost – but follow these effects through multiple sites. The confusion, blood and torn flesh that follows an IED strike does not after all appear only in these moments. Other instances of this aftermath, other apparitions of ghosts, must be sought out. Questions must be asked about whose bodies are affected in these instances, and which bodies have enacted the violence that causes such effects? By doing so 'other' stories of war can begin to emerge, marginal or 'uncanny' experiences brought to the forefront, and borders mapped around a liberal warrior have the potential to be disrupted. The high visibility of the aftermath of an IED – in the coverage afforded to it and the increasing numbers of returning soldiers with limbs missing and disabled bodies – allow us to bear witness to the effects of ten or twenty kilograms of explosive on the human body. It is now bloody and visceral aftermaths of other wartime violence – of 'symbolic' violence – that need to be traced and uncovered.

Revealing brutality

Sean Rayment's 2011 book, *Bomb Hunters*, charts his time as an embedded reported in Afghanistan in 2010 with a British bomb disposal team. In some ways dissimilar to other books in the 'TiC-lit' genre inasmuch as much of the 'action' is that of an ATO defusing an IED rather than the firefights that dominate many of the others (there does remain however, a number of pages dedicated to the fighting exploits of infantry soldiers), the book is similar inasmuch as when British-perpetrated violence does occur it remains what Carver has described as 'symbolic'. While the descriptions and details of IED explosions and their

aftermath can last pages – some of the details given have been used and reproduced in this chapter – the bullets fired, missiles launched and airstrikes called in by British soldiers remain in the abstract: as the amount fired or their technical capabilities. Unlike IED violence that emerges through descriptions of bloodiness and obscenity, its aftermath of torn flesh, gaping wounds and mutilated bodies detailed and revealed to the reader, warfare enacted by British liberal warriors is almost casually depicted. For example, when Rayment recalls riding in convoy in a Ridgeback armoured vehicle, the majority of his description of the Ridgeback is technological. Rayment's descriptions include details of the "remotely controlled 7.62-mm chain gun which is mounted on the roof and controlled by the vehicle commander through a pistol-grip control"; the "camera mounted on the gun [which] gives the commander a crystal-clear 360-degree view on a drop-down computer screen"; and that this gun can "fire sixty rounds per minute" and "kill anything within a range of 1,200 metres" (2011a: 96). Inside the Ridgeback, Rayment admits to feeling "detached from the outside world", that it is "a surreal experience", and "straight out of some hi-tech computer game" (*ibid.*: 96). Amongst these technical descriptions, Rayment describes Ian Farrell, the regimental sergeant major and vehicle commander, manoeuvring "the cross-hairs [of the mounted gun] onto some unsuspecting target" (*ibid.*: 96). Despite knowing that "[t]he commander does not experience any recoil" (*ibid.*: 96), there is no discussion of what happens next: what the target was, if the target was hit, even if the weapon was fired. In another passage Rayment details an ambush carried out by the Grenadier Guards where "a small, isolated group of British soldiers…with guile and cunning, out-thought the Taliban and used the insurgents' favoured weapon – the IED – against them" (*ibid.*: 229). Not only does this 'cunning' plan which uses the enemy's own strengths against them sound very similar to tactics used by the Taliban in their planting of IEDs which Rayment is openly critical of throughout his book[155], but the description of the ambush itself takes on film-like quality. Snipers "went for head shots, and…insurgents fell dead"; Javelins[156] "whoosh[ed]"; and insurgents whether they "chose to stand and fight or run were cut down by machine-gun and sniper fire" (*ibid.*: 239-40).

Unlike the details we're given of dismembered bodies, bloodied victims, and chaos and confusion in the aftermath of an IED strike, the violence in these descriptions is clean and precise. There is no aftermath other than a body count. Instead, after the ambush

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155 Rayment does however go to great lengths to make it clear that the ambush "was not an act of retribution", and was launched only once "the risk to the local population would be zero" (Rayment 2011a: 229).

156 Javelin is the British military's medium range anti-tank guided weapon. "Although designed primarily to destroy tanks and light armoured vehicles, Javelin will also provide a potent, all-weather, day or night capability against fixed defences, such as bunkers and buildings" (MoD n.d.p).

detailed above a soldier speaking with Rayment describes it as "a fantastic result. Ten enemy killed… We were all suitably chuffed" (*ibid*.: 240). However, this 'fantastic result' also produces dismembered bodies, bloodied victims, and chaos and confusion, and it is this that must be rendered visible, must be paid attention to if the haunting given notice to by the ghost is to be respected. Liberal warriors too are capable of perpetrating and inflicting obscene violence with horrific effects. That they are on a mission for 'hearts and minds' and that we come to know them as family members, best friends and colleagues, work to map borders that place complicity in wartime violence as outside the bounds of possibility of this soldiering figure. A distinction has been made between what a liberal warrior enacts during war and what a liberal warrior endures and is subjected to. However, these borders have been shown to be unreliable and porous. That the distinction is not as clear, not as neat, as some of the language used to describe such violence implies. As Belkin has pointed to, a militarised masculine liberal warrior is not just a subjectivity that emerges through the marking of boundaries, it is also one where boundaries are conflated and confused. Thus, while IEDs may be crudely constructed and offer no opportunity to 'fight back' while liberal warriors use state-of-the-art weaponry and abide by strict rules of engagement, both result in aftermaths of dead bodies, mutilated limbs and bloodied corpses, and both cause fear and pain in those they are aimed at.

That ghosts will always emerge within the borders of a liberal warrior, that the figure will always be haunted by that which it tries to expel – the bloodiness and brutality of warfare – reveals not just the incompleteness and precariousness of a liberal warrior, but also that engagement and 'doing' of such violence is integral to a liberal warrior's constitution. To engage in nation building, to win the hearts and minds of the local population, to do what it is we are told liberal warriors do, British troops must go on foot patrols, must take on the enemy, and must engage in warfare and violence that can have no outcome but blood, pain, eviscerated bodies and torn flesh – even if such an outcome is subsequently referred to as 'fantastic'. The brutality and barbarism of wartime violence is then integral to a liberal warrior subjectivity. Despite the turn away from 'shock and awe' tactics, the re-centring of the human soldiering body, the cruelty and brutality of war manages to resurface with all its fleshiness and corporeality. Ultimately, war is not about 'hearts and minds', nation building, or soldiers who know how to engage with the local population. War is about force, about meeting violence with greater violence, even if that greater violence is perceived as 'smarter', more humane and more precise. As the enactor (and sometimes withholder) of this violence and its associated brutality, a liberal warrior is inextricably tied to and (re)constituted through it.

Indeed, as soldiers' memoirs, their interviews on military recruitment videos, and my own conversations with members of the infantry during my fieldwork suggests, it is engagement in such warfare, such violence, that first attracts these young adults to the profession. Speaking with Rayment, the ATO Karl Ley comments on this:

> The infantry expect to get into firefights with the Taliban and many of them actually want to. That's what they joined the Army to do – go to Afghanistan and kill the Taliban. And when the shooting kicks off you can actually see that some of these guys are really in their element (cited in Rayment 2011a: 35).

That soldiers are not only attracted to the idea of warfare, but that they are in the 'element' during it is something that is reiterated in a number of war memoirs. In these, as with Rayment's descriptions of British-enacted violence, descriptions can take on a casual, almost surreal quality. They are stories of pure excitement and elicit something of a disconnect between the violences soldiers are engaged in and its effects. Patrick Hennessey writes about "whoop[ing] with delight" during his first 'contact', while seeing his friend "ecstatically letting rip with the GPMG [general-purpose machine gun]", and them both "bounding gleefully from the vehicles and firing, actually firing real bullets… Actually firing our weapons in glorious and chaotic anger" (2009: 3-4). Much of Hennessey's first memoir reflects on this troubling love of the fight. On this simultaneous desire to be home from tour, yet remaining troubled by the question, posed by an episode of *Grey's Anatomy* he watches while in Afghanistan, "how would you spend your last day?" As Hennessey writes,

> None of us out here could answer that question with the certainty I suspect those at home would want and expect. Maybe it's just not a question we want to ask ourselves while a possible answer remains 'scrapping with the boys in the Green Zone'" (2009: 289).

A liberal warrior therefore is not only incapable of escaping or avoiding their own complicity in the brutality and bloodiness of war, but some – many if my experience of soldiers' first-hand recollections in their various forms is anything to go by – seemingly revel in it.

Warfare thus provides a site where a liberal warrior is simultaneously (re)articulated and destroyed. During the 1990s and the advent of 'technowar', war's visceral 'realities' were rendered *un*-visible through 'smart' weaponry, a language of precision and accuracy, and the visual grammar of a pilot's display screen in place of the rubble and bodies such technology leaves in its wake. Today, a 'softer' and 'gentler' militarised masculine subject – a liberal warrior – works to conceal and render *un*-visible the brutality and bloodiness of war. Through stories of the mission for 'hearts and minds', the training and mentoring of Afghan

troops, and the strict rules of engagement NATO troops operate within, a liberal warrior subjectivity is (re)produced and the "continuing centrality of air power, kinetic force and physical violence" (McSorley 2012: 55) papered over. In these articulations of a liberal warrior, it is the barbarism of war – the blood, torn flesh and eviscerated bodies – that has been expelled, and it is these aspects that haunt the identity. A liberal warrior thus appears as completely disconnected from Elaine Scarry's simple statement that "war is injuring" (1985: 63), and that they could be implicated in that injuring. That which has been excluded however, will always return, and it is a ghost – the concrete materialisation of a haunting – that gives notice to that which has been expelled. Understanding the violence, blood and chaos of an IED strike and its aftermath as one such materialisation of a ghost, it is in this moment that the brutality and barbarism of war is rendered viscerally visible.

Merely the appearance of a ghost is not however, enough to disrupt a liberal warrior subjectivity, to expose its hauntings. By 'reading' a ghost in particular ways violence can be located 'outside' a liberal warrior, its *un*-visibility maintained, and a liberal warrior's borders (re)mapped and (re)articulated – the haunting is abandoned and 'ghosted' all over again. Firstly, readings of an IED explosion and the brutal effects it enacts emerge in singularity, without any relationality. The context of the event – war – disappears from representations of it, and without recognition of the 'other side' of an IED's violence – a liberal warrior's weaponry, technological expertise and tactics it has been produced in relation to. A border is marked between an IED that inflicts bloody and fleshy violence, and a liberal warrior who endures it. The border that positions the violence and brutality of an IED outside the realms of possibility of a liberal warrior is not however, the only border mapped. Boundaries are marked not just around and between those who perpetrate violence and those who are subjected to it, but also between different 'types' of violence. Read through colonial logics, the violence of an IED is understood as somehow beyond the pale of 'ordinary' or 'regular' warfare. Lastly, as the figure through which war itself is read and understood, how a liberal warrior is 'known' is integral to our understandings of wartime violence. Taking the Imperial War Museum's *War Story* exhibition as one way that liberal warriors are familiarised and personalised, representations in this exhibition go to a great deal of effort to depict British soldiers as more than the relations of violence they are entangled within. Soldiers thus become 'known' to us in ways separate to the brutality and barbarism of war.

However, a liberal warrior militarised masculinity is not only a site where borders are mapped, but also one where borders are conflated and confused, and revealed to be porous and unstable. Thus, if we return to the materialisation of the ghost in the explosion of an

IED, its aftermath, and the blood, torn flesh and mutilated bodies that appear, we can trace this through multiple sites and unstable boundaries, rendering it visible in the neat, clean and 'precise' warfare a liberal warrior engages in. This brutality and fleshiness of violence is shown to not only be always already present, haunting and disrupting borders that have been mapped around a benign and violence-less figure, but also to be integral to its constitution, for it is in the 'doing' of counterinsurgency – the winning of hearts and minds, the deploying of accurate and precise weaponry – that such ghosts emerge and hauntings are revealed. It is in performances that mark boundaries around a liberal warrior and separate it from the brutality of an IED that the bloodiness and barbarism of war once again emerges. It is through constructions of a 'softer' and 'gentler' militarised masculine subjectivity, its constituting practices and (re)iterating of borders, that ghosts manifest, hauntings are revealed, and that brutal, bloody and painful wartime violences are made possible (and then that they can go relatively unnoticed, or at least not widely discussed). Failing to confront and 'respect' the haunting brutality and barbarism within a liberal warrior means failing to recognise this.

What then is at stake in taking the construction and (re)construction of a liberal warrior militarised masculinity seriously? What are we in danger of being seduced by when we make claims to a 'new' militarised masculine identity that is divorced from its gendered, raced and sexualised past, and who it is claimed can partake in war without partaking in its bloodiness, brutality and violence? It is to these questions and a discussion of the methodological contribution of this thesis and how it enables me to answer my research question, as well as some broader implications, that my conclusion will now address.

Conclusion

Ghosts and Hauntings: A Methodological Contribution

At the centre of this thesis has been a contemporary construction of British militarised masculinity, and what I have called – borrowing the term from Alison Howell – a liberal warrior. A liberal warrior is a soldiering figure that has emerged because of, and in line with, the needs and effects of counterinsurgency warfare. It is a 'softer', 'gentler', more restrained soldier. A soldier who is both war fighter and nation builder. Surrounding this figure are the violences that first caught my attention and that I wanted to understand how became possible: the naked and sexually abused detainees of Camp Breadbasket; Baha Mousa's 93 separate injuries and broken and bruised corpse; and the lifeless, limbless, eviscerated body of an IED victim. It is this figure of a liberal warrior and the violence that surrounds it that led me to ask my research question: In what ways do contemporary constructions of militarised masculinity help make possible specific acts of wartime violence?

This is a 'type' of question that has been asked before by feminists and this thesis both emerges from this literature and contributes to it. Specifically, the contribution of this thesis lies in its approach; in its epistemological assumptions and the methodology it maps out. This conclusion then will detail these methodological contributions, unpacking how my methodology allows for both the revelation of the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior militarised masculinity and the ways in which it provides a bridge for the conceptual space between the banal and mundane everyday 'doings' of the subjectivity, and the obscene and spectacular violences that drew my attention. I start by returning to the work of Avery Gordon whose writings on 'ghostly matters' I have appropriated in order to construct my methodology. I make clear the ways in which Gordon's original work on hauntings and my appropriation of it differs, particularly with reference to my freeing and disconnecting of it from its Marxist-inspired foundations. Moving then to the first of my methodological contributions, the ways in which paying attention to ghosts and hauntings both reveal the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior and map out a very specific soldiering subject is unpacked. Reflecting back on the myths of asexuality and discipline introduced in my third chapter, their connections with ghosts and hauntings, how they are specific to the here and now, and their implications for the (im)possible constitution of a liberal warrior are all detailed. Turning to my second contribution, I unpack how my methodology allows connections to

be made and relations tracked across the mundane everyday doings of a militarised masculine subjectivity and the spectacular violences seen in war. My methodology reveals that both emerge from the attempted exorcism of hauntings and are in fact intimately connected to one another. It is then, by drawing these two methodological insights together that I am able to answer my research question. In short, that it can only ever be an *attempt* to construct a contemporary militarised masculine subjectivity – the (im)possibility – and that it is through the continual need to rearticulate and reiterate this always-precarious subject, through the attempts at stabilisation, that obscene violences in war become possible. I return to the violences detailed in this thesis to unpack the ways this takes place. To end I turn my attention to the broader effects of my research and my methodology, and offer two potential wider implications.

A BRIEF RETURN TO GORDON

The methodological contribution of this thesis is mapped out in my second chapter and through my particular adoption and appropriation of Avery Gordon's work on 'ghostly matters'. Writing about her quest for a "new way of knowing" (Gordon 2008: x), Gordon appeals to her readers to pay attention to the ghosts and hauntings – those individuals, things and ideas that have been excluded or appear only at the margins – that fill the social world. For Gordon, haunting is a constituent feature of contemporary life (*ibid.*: 7) and the language of ghostly matters is used to describe the ways in which current social analysis fails to describe their haunting presences. While I take heed of Gordon's appeals for us to take notice of what normally goes unnoticed and to confront the uncanny, the 'ghostly' appearances that do not make sense, I unhinge her work from its material and Marxist foundations, locating it instead in feminist and poststructural ontologies and epistemologies.

For Gordon, hauntings were a way to "understand and write evocatively about some of the ways modern forms of dispossession, exploitation and repression concretely impact the lives of people". It "meant trying to understand the terms of racial capitalism and the determining role of monopolistic and militaristic state violence", and the questions Gordon asks reflects "the type of Marxist analysis" through which she "was intellectually reared and trained"[157] (Gordon 2011: 1). In Gordon's writings "haunting is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life" (*ibid.*: 2),

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[157] Gordon identifies the English Marxist tradition as being particularly influential and names William Morris, E.P. Thompson, Raymond Williams and John Berger as writers she has a "certain affinity" with (2011: 1-2).

and they emerge from and are produced by material, often economic, structures. Gordon is explicit: "haunting is not about invisibility or unknowability per se, it refers to what's living and breathing in the place hidden from view: people, places, histories, knowledge, memories, ways of life, ideas" (*ibid.*: 3). For me however, and as this thesis has demonstrated, hauntings are the constitutively unknowable; they are shapeless, formless and without foundation. Hauntings operate as the *constitutive outside*, as both constitutive and disruptive to that which they have attempted to be expelled from. It is this reliance on what Pin-Fat and Stern call the "inside/possible" on the "outside/impossible for its constitution, and vice versa" (2005: 29) that produces the first methodological contribution of hauntings. However, before discussing this further, a brief word on *ghosts*. While hauntings are ephemeral, fleeting and impossible to capture, ghosts, as the concrete effect of hauntings, can be seen, grabbed on to and pointed at. Ghosts are the objects, behaviours or actions that reveal the impossibility of full expulsion. They are those things that enter into our field of vision and do not fit, cause a disruption, to the familiar story or 'feminist fable' that has been told. Ghosts emerge in multiple sites – they emerge as the spectacular and the mundane, they emerge as that which can easily escape notice, and they emerge as the only thing you can notice – and it is by paying attention to them that the precise insights of this methodological approach can be unpacked.

MY FIRST METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION: THE PRODUCTION AND (IM)POSSIBILITY OF A LIBERAL WARRIOR

Turning now to the first methodological contribution of my appropriation of Gordon's work on ghosts and hauntings. Giving notice to ghosts and becoming attuned to the hauntings they signal towards allows for the revelation of the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior subjectivity. Understanding hauntings as the constitutive outside and drawing on Pin-Fat and Stern's work on (im)possibility, a liberal warrior can never be 'complete', full representation can never be achieved, because "what is excluded [the haunting] is an integral, constitutive part of that which is included" (Pin-Fat and Stern 2005: 29). Successful exclusion or exorcism is never possible, as to quote Pin-Fat and Stern, "[t]hese hauntings…are forever present" (*ibid.*: 29). A liberal warrior's (im)possibility means that inherent within its construction and 'doing' is its simultaneous unravelling and *un*doing – failure is written into its production. The (always already) presence of hauntings disrupts claims to, and the possibility of, stable and 'complete' subjectivities.

In order to appear as stable and coherent a liberal warrior subjectivity is produced through a series of binary oppositions – masculine/feminine; straight/queer; white/non-white; mind/body; rational/irrational; civility/barbarism – with the expectation that identification with the former term will engender a rejection of the latter, and stabilisation through this rejection. However, as authors such as Pin-Fat and Stern and Aaron Belkin (2012) have revealed, the latter term is not merely cast out and denied, rather, it remains integral to the constitution of the former, with liberal warrior subjects required to enter into "intimate" (Belkin 2012: 4) and complex relationships with them. Hauntings, aligned with the latter term and 'outside' generalised understandings of militarised masculinity, work therefore not only to disrupt the allying of the subjectivity with the former term, but make fragile the very boundary that separates them. Furthermore, it is not just that a liberal warrior is haunted by its 'Other' in the binary pairing (as well as the whole indefinite domain of the 'non-former term'), but that the borders that separate them – and thus the borders that trace a liberal warrior – are porous and fragmented. What is marked as 'masculine', 'straight' or 'rational', and what is marked as 'feminine', 'queer' and 'irrational', is not fixed, but unstable and contextually dependent. However, while my methodology of ghosts and hauntings allows the simultaneous constitution and deconstitution to be revealed, paying attention to these ghostly matters can also provide precise insights about the specific 'type' of soldiering subject under construction, and allows us to map the contours of a liberal warrior[158]. Therefore, before focusing attention on the (im)possibility, I will unpack what ghosts and hauntings tell us about the production – the *doing* – of a liberal warrior.

THE PRODUCTION

As my third chapter demonstrated, two 'myths' are central to the practices of basic training and wider military life – the myth of asexuality and the myth of discipline. A liberal warrior subjectivity is produced in and through these myths, as well as gendered discourses that both shape and are shaped by the myths. It is a subjectivity that is divested of the messiness of embodied passions, desires and urges, and leaves in their place a rational and controlled soldiering subject in line with Cartesian understandings of the Self. While neither of these myths are 'new' – homosexuality within militaries has long been policed against and discipline historically recognised as a cornerstone of an 'effective' fighting force – in the

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[158] That I first map a liberal warrior's 'doing' prior to its 'undoing' in the section that follows is not to suggest that these two processes occur in a linear fashion. Rather – and as my methodology makes clear – these two processes occur concurrently. Indeed, that they take place simultaneously is written into the logic of their operation.

contemporary context, the hauntings that are attempted to be expelled, while without definitive shape or structure, are distinct to the here and now. This both reflects and reproduces a specific soldiering subject.

Turning my attention first to the myth of asexuality: as noted above, militaries have long been assumed to be heterosexual institutions, with homosexuality both formally denied and internally policed against. However, in the British case (in-line with a number of other western militaries), the lifting of the ban in 2000 on homosexuals openly serving within the armed forces has meant such policing of homosexuality now has to take place around 'real' homosexual bodies. The homosociality of the military and the homoerotic and even hypersexualised play that soldiers and recruits engage in (from various degrees of semi- and full-nudity to simulated acts of anal and oral sex with one another) is well-known, but while prior to 2000 such play was deemed permissible as those involved 'knew' theirs was an exclusively heterosexual environment, today no such assurances can be made. Previously the (assumed) fully heterosexual environment – although this was of course never the case – allowed the homoerotic and hypersexualised acts to remain definitively non-sexual and the heterosexuality, and thus masculinity, of the participants to remain intact. Today no such assurances can be made; there is no guarantee that the bodies populating military spaces conform to the heterosexual norm. The heterosexual soldier may be undressing or showering next to a homosexual soldier – transgression now potentially lurks within.

As this thesis has made clear however, the production of militarised masculinities has always involved complex and intimate relationships with queerness and homosexuality, it has never been a simple or straightforward expulsion. And today, with homosexual bodies openly serving, the careful and delicate tracing of homosexual 'acceptance' and homosexual denigration is integral to the constitution of a contemporary liberal warrior. While what had previously been sought to be expelled was, quite literally, homosexual bodies, today, the inclusion of these bodies is part of what signals towards the softer, gentler, more enlightened liberal warrior[159]. It is then, not that particular bodies are sought to be excluded, but what these bodies *do* and the presumed heterosexuality (and thus masculinity) of their actions that is policed. While self-identified homosexual bodies can populate the ranks, the entire indefinite domain of 'non-heterosexual' action or potentially homosexual action is sought to be expelled. Acts that can signal a departure from the (heterosexual) norm include crying,

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[159] Indeed, formal and legal acceptance of homosexuality has become a key site for the battles of 'civilisation', with Middle Eastern and some African nations' hostility towards homosexuality frequently held up as proof as their backwardness and barbarity.

physical inferiority manifesting in a failure to succeed in tests of physical endurance, and any other numerous ways a body can gesture contravention.

Drawing on and adapting an argument made by Sherene Razack about white armies remaining *white* armies despite the inclusion of individual Brown and Black soldiers as "they remain regulated by the civilizing mission" (2004: 55), the inclusion of homosexual bodies will not disrupt the heterosexuality of the institution as long as they look, perform and *do* as (assumed) heterosexual bodies. In effect, homosexual bodies are regulated by the heteronormativity of the institution. In her own research on the British military, Victoria Basham asked (male) military personnel about their thoughts on the lifting of the ban; their responses point at the ways in which homosexual bodies have been included without disruption. For example, one soldier Basham interviews says of a fellow soldier who disclosed he was gay to his all-male combat corps: "he's a pretty pushy, aggressive kind of person and…he's hugely fit, running, cycling, marathon running. He just hasn't had an issue with it at all" (cited in Basham 2013: 100-1). In this case, the homosexual body is performing, even out-performing, what a heterosexual body does; its inclusion and everyday doings offers no disruption to the heteronormativity of the institution. As Basham states:

> One of the key limitations of the British military's post-2000 policy on sexual orientation is that whilst it allows for the disclosure of non-heterosexualities, this does not necessarily mean that 'out' expressions of lesbian, gay and bisexuality are easily accommodated by the policy change (*ibid.*: 96).

As a senior officer in the Royal Navy says in reference to the policy change, "as long as people keep their [sexual] lives to themselves and don't push it down somebody else's throat, then that's fine" (cited in Basham 2013: 96). Heterosexual bodies meanwhile can do what homosexual bodies (are presumed to) do – be that showering together, engaging in homoerotic 'banter' or play, or "noshing each other off at the bar" (Hennessey 2012: 256) – and remain heterosexual, masculine and soldierly.

Paying attention to ghosts and hauntings means what is attempted to be excluded is revealed as well as uncovering the kinds of subjects being produced. The ghosts that sediment and become visible are *not* homosexual bodies for what is being rejected is not as straightforward as homosexuality. Ghosts appear and are rendered concrete in the homosociality of military living, in the frequency of male group nudity, and in homoerotic and hypersexualised acts. They signal hauntings that are products of multiple negotiations and a liberal warrior's complex and contradictory relations with characteristics it is 'not'. It is not that a liberal warrior cannot self-identify as homosexual, but rather that homosexuality cannot be perceived to mark what a soldier does – they can't 'push it down somebody else's

throat'. It is then, the whole indefinite domain of the 'non-heterosexual' that is proscribed. However, as that which haunts such homosexual potential can never be fully be exorcised, it will remain an integral constituting part of a liberal warrior subjectivity. This duality and simultaneity – *(im)possibility* – will be unpacked further below, but first a discussion on how ghosts and hauntings tell us something specific about the effects of the myth of discipline.

Like the intimate tying of heterosexual potency, masculinity and fighting ability, discipline too has long been considered a military virtue. It has also been instilled in remarkably similar ways throughout the history of basic training and across most western militaries, with rigid timetabling, drill, and fetishistic rules referring to personal appearance and belongings all familiar practices. As Sandra Whitworth notes after detailing the British military training practices in place in the late twentieth century: "This is not Britain in 1690. This is Britain in 1990" (2004: 157). However, despite similarities in training practices, what such disciplining moves are attempting to expel has shifted. Previously, and as John Hockey noted in 1986, "unquestioning obedience" was viewed as the lynchpin of military discipline (1986: 23). Today, and in the context of a rapidly changing war landscape, discipline appears more readily attributable to adaptability, to rationality in the face of uncertainty, and to control over the use of force – to those attributes that mark a Cartesian subject. As what soldiers are expected to do has shifted and a discursively idealised militarised masculinity transformed, what borders the myth of discipline traces and the specificities of what it attempts to expel have also altered. Discipline is now visible in the strict rules of engagement that govern British soldiers' actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, in the in-depth training soldiers are given pre-deployment regarding how to both question the enemy and withstand enemy questioning if captured, and discipline is visible in the embracement of the 'hearts and minds' counterinsurgency doctrine over annihilation of the enemy. While previously what had attempted to be excluded was individuality, challenges to authority and (to a greater or lesser extent) freethinking, today, the expulsion – the haunting – is messiness, uncontrollability and disorder. It is these that render rationality and control impossible, and these that are deemed 'outside' a liberal warrior. Ghosts emerge not in the refusal to carry out orders or in overt disobedience, but in the small, everyday resistances a soldier's body performs. In their 'styling' of the regulation uniform, the dodging of obstacles during personal training and marching off the square during drill, and the growing of beards and hair against regulation. It is in these moments that the irrepressibility, the always-in-excess potential of a soldiering subject becomes visible. It is not that soldiers will disobey, that they

will not follow orders, but that the subjectivity produced can never be fully controlled, the human body too messy and unpredictable to structure and shape and mould with any certainty.

As with the myth of asexuality, overlap with what had previously attempted to be excluded and how these exclusions are sought, as well as their resonances with wider discourses and understandings about what it is to be a 'man', give these myths the appearance of continuity and timelessness. For example, the exclusion of homosexual bodies in relation to the expulsion of the homosexual doing or homosexual potential of a body; likewise, the exclusion of individuality and the failure to obey superiors' commands on the battlefield in relation to the expulsion of uncontrollability and an irrational hysteria that renders a soldier unable to fight. Furthermore, for centuries heterosexuality and masculinity have supported and fed into one another, while understandings of control and restraint been integral to (liberal, enlightened) conceptions of manhood. It is the history and overlap of how these myths have been filled that gives them their impression of timelessness, of being somehow 'natural'. Their history, Barthes would say, has been "emptied…and filled…with nature" (2009: 169). The memory that these myths "were once made" (*ibid.*: 169) – are always and only constructed – has been obscured. Tracing these myths back, tracing how ideas of soldiering, masculinity and war are constantly shifting and changing, reveals their lack of stable foundations, their lack of fixity. Signifiers do not produce signifieds, but merely produce more signifiers: myths remain just what they are – mythical – and, the liberal warriors they both signal towards and produce, are never complete, stable or fixed.

The (im)possibility

What is revealed first in my third chapter but also throughout the rest of the thesis is that it is in the very attempts at producing a liberal warrior – in expelling what it is 'not' and mapping its borders – that its (im)possibility is revealed. Or, to put this in the language I appropriated from Gordon: it is in the attempts of exorcising that which haunts a liberal warrior that ghosts appear. Thus, the doing and undoing of a liberal warrior, its constitution and deconstitution, are not distinct and separate, but profoundly implicated in one another. My first methodological contribution traces and makes visible these connections between the (re)drawing and (re)mapping of borders, their porosity, and the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior. Some examples and further explanation will make this explicit.

The homosociality of the military and the 'male bonding' this environment facilitates – often through homoerotic and hypersexualised behaviours – is a central constituting practice of soldiering subjects. The myth of asexuality helps make such homosociality possible by marking a boundary between what is considered non-sexual homosocial behaviour and (homo)sexual behaviour. This boundary not only maintains a separation between the homosocial and homosexual but also maps the contours of a (heterosexual) liberal warrior. In turn, through their doing of such homosocial activities the presumed heterosexual liberal warrior ensures the homosocial and homosexual continue to appear as diametrically opposed to one another. In effect, the myth of asexuality and the heterosexuality of a liberal warrior are co-constitutive. However, building on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's claim that there is an "unbrokeness of a continuum between [the] homosocial and homosexual" (1985: 1-2), these myths are never 'complete' and the boundaries they map never hard. Rather, they are porous and the subjects they demarcate fragile. Neither is fixed or secure, and hauntings of homosexual potential that had attempted to be expelled pass through, appearing on both sides of the boundary, sedimenting as a ghost. These 'ghosts' are the homoeroticism and the hypersexualised behaviours so prevalent within military cultures: the male group nudity, simulated scenes of anal and oral sex, "lad's mag humour" (Hennessey 2012: 257), and rumours of 'noshing each other off at the bar'. They reveal the incompleteness of the myth of asexuality, the simultaneity of the homosocial and homosexual, and the porosity of the border. They reveal the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior: that it is in the very doing and constructing of the subjectivity – the male bonding and homosociality – that its undoing simultaneously takes place and its incompleteness revealed. It is in the attempts at drawing and fixing a subject's borders that its always already excess and lack are rendered visible.

Like the myth of asexuality, the myth of discipline operates through marking borders. That control and disorder, neatness and messiness, rationality and irrationality, can be clearly demarcated and it is the former terms that are sought to be imbued in a recruit via particular training processes. Disorder, messiness and irrationality are attempted to be expelled through fetishistic controls upon a soldier's body and what that body wears and does. They are expelled through rigid timetabling and the requirement for soldiers to be in specific places at specific times. And they are expelled through the numerous regulations and rules of engagement soldiers are expected to know and abide by during a tour of duty. However, also like the myth of asexuality, the borders mapped by the myth of discipline are not hard and fixed, and the disorder, messiness and irrationality that has attempted to be exorcised returns to haunt those former terms of the binary and the liberal warrior subjects

they mark. Furthermore, it is in the attempts at expelling them, in the very creating of a liberal warrior through the doings mentioned above that ghosts appear and hauntings are made apparent. When hair length, dress and posture are so tightly regulated, the growing of hair, the 'styling' of the uniform and slouching on the drill square reveal the impossibility of their totality or completeness. Similarly, the supposed control and rationality of a liberal warrior finds no reflection or likeness on the battleground with its chaos and confusion – the so-called 'fog of war' Clausewitz wrote about in the nineteenth century. On a tour of duty, the rules, regulations and everyday obsessions of barrack living are rendered ridiculous; failure is written in to the very experience of an operational tour. Ghosts sediment as beards and hair that grow out of control, and uniforms are cast off in the heat of the desert. In short, a liberal warrior's body resists and the surface upon which a liberal warrior subjectivity is written reveals the ultimate failure of the myth and the inescapability of hauntings. A liberal warrior both comes into being and undoes itself in the same moment – herein lies its (im)possibility.

MY SECOND METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION: BRIDGING THE CONCEPTUAL SPACE

While my first methodological contribution reveals the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior, my second provides a bridge for the conceptual space between the mundane, everyday doings – homosocial male bonding, the disciplining of a body and its movements – that produce liberal warrior subjectivities, and the spectacular and obscene wartime violences that first caught my attention. This second contribution demonstrates that these banal and violent manifestations are not so far separated from one another. Again, this is not the first time a feminist has pointed to the implications of militarised masculinities' training/construction in their violences, nor to the ways in which everyday banalities may be intimately tied to the waging of wars and violences of all levels. For example, Cynthia Enloe's broad scholarship politicises the everyday, uncovering the ways in which unremarkable and commonplace activities are implicated in militarism across the globe. However, what my methodology does do is provide a way to recognise the "unhappy echo" (Woodward and Winter 2007: 74) or "obscene underside" (Franks 2003: 149) of military practice. To identify that which takes place 'benignly' during basic training or on a tour of duty also takes place obscenely. That the homosocial and at times homoerotic and hypersexualised behaviours of troops is replayed and repackaged in the enforced nakedness and sexual abuse photographed at Camp Breadbasket. That the control and discipline

needed to carry out 'enhanced interrogation methods' shifts with the terrain and with the bodies it is directed at, as played out on the beaten and bloodied body of Baha Mousa. And finally, that the compassionate and humane warfare of 'hearts and minds' is rendered barbarically visible in the aftermath of an IED explosion.

My second methodological contribution confronts head-on why things can 'look' the same but yet remain analytically separate. When Ross Limbaugh, an American conservative radio talk-show host, likened the scenes of torture at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq to a fraternity hazing ritual – as "no different from what happens at the Skull and Bones[160] initiation" (cited in Meyer 2004) – he was ignoring and belittling the imperialistic, misogynistic and racialised aspects of the abuse[161]. However, while Limbaugh is patently wrong in his claims that the two scenes are 'no different', his statement does draw attention to the fact that the photographs that emerged from Abu Ghraib and Camp Breadbasket bear a strikingly similar aesthetic to the homoerotic and sexually-charged scenes of basic training in both the UK and US militaries. The difference resides in that while when soldiers engage in male group nudity or simulate anal and oral sex with one another, they are reinscribed as masculine and heterosexual liberal warriors. When these same acts however, are forcefully re-enacted by the bodies of Iraqi detainees – bodies already marked as culturally and physically inferior – they signify homosexualised transgressions, subordination and femininity. Relatedly, the injuries found on Mousa's corpse tell a story of a violent interrogation as that *imagined* a British soldier would face by enemy Iraqi forces, and the aftermath of a 'clean' and 'precise' British airstrike results in similar scenes of visceral physical dismemberment and mutilation as a crudely constructed IED. In short, visible (and imagined) violences of war, positioned as conceptually different, even as oppositional, actually look remarkably similar. Therefore, it matters little what the practices and performances of basic training, everyday barrack living or a tour of duty look like or appear as. Rather, it is the contexts they emerge in and the scripted bodies they both mark and are enacted by that operates to make them meaningful and to signal towards homosociality or homosexuality, control or barbarism, and masculinity or femininity.

Recognising these appearances as ghosts however, means connections between them can be tracked. They are ghosts not just because all these moments disrupt the stories we have been told about a benign and disciplined liberal warrior, but because all emerge and

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[160] Skull and Bones is an exclusive and infamous undergraduate secret society at Yale University in America. The former US President, George W. Bush is among its previous members.
[161] Limbaugh was also ignoring the humiliation and physical dangers associated with such 'harmless' hazing rituals. It takes only a cursory Internet search to bring about several stories of recent deaths and injuries of young, predominantly male, college students undergoing fraternity initiations in the US.

become possible through the attempted exorcism of a liberal warrior's hauntings – those things a liberal warrior is 'not' – and the concomitant (re)marking of borders that map the subjectivity. From male group nudity, homoerotic play, and the sexualised abuse at Camp Breadbasket, the (homo)sexual potential of soldiering doings sediments and is rendered visible. Similarly, from the styling of the uniform, the chaos and confusion on the battlefield, and the unrestrained and frenzied violence shown against Mousa, it is the messiness, the uncontrollability of a liberal warrior that is taking on a concrete form. It is by tracing the different forms that hauntings appear as and the different locations they emerge in, that the connection between the banal and the spectacularly violent become recognisable. These two sites of the everyday and the obscene, often positioned as diametrically opposed, are in fact intimately connected. And it is this connection that is central to answering my research question.

BRINGING THE TWO TOGETHER...

It is then these two methodological insights that come together in order to answer my research question. Firstly, that it is, and can only ever be, *attempts* to construct a militarised masculine subjectivity due to a liberal warrior's (im)possibility. And secondly, that the everyday doings and makings of a liberal warrior are integral to understanding the spectacular violences such a figure can both perpetrate and endure.

A contemporary construction of militarised masculinity – a liberal warrior – is never complete, never fixed, and the borders that map the subjectivity never secure. The myths of asexuality and discipline that a liberal warrior is meant to embody remain, like a liberal warrior itself, mythical, unachievable and haunted by that which troubles and disrupts them. Indeed, it is the very attempts at achieving 'full' representation, of (re)marking and (re)drawing the lines, that its (im)possibility is revealed. It is in the 'doing' of the subjectivity that a liberal warrior's simultaneous undoing occurs; that during homosocial male bonding, their own homosexual potential reveals itself in the sexualised banter and homoerotic play. Likewise, in the attempts at expelling the messiness and uncontrollability of recruits through the strict controls placed upon their bodies, the excess and impossibility of complete order is made apparent. This duality of doing and undoing can be traced across multiple sites and can be seen both in the mundane everyday and in the spectacularly violent. Taking the examples worked through in this thesis and addressed above, I will now revisit them, detailing how the methodological insights of this project can explain how specific wartime violences are made possible.

I have already reiterated the ways in which the everyday practices and performances of basic training and barrack living map the contours of a liberal warrior while at the same time rendering apparent the precariousness of these borders and the simultaneous lack and excess of the subjectivity they seek to delineate. I want now to rearticulate how this also takes place in the barbaric militarised violences that first caught my attention. The sexual abuses at Camp Breadbasket, the tortured body of Baha Mousa and the visceral after-effects of humane 'hearts and minds' violence all work to trouble the stories we have been told, the borders that have been mapped, around a supposedly benign and controlled soldiering subject. While it is evident the ways in which such moments signal an undoing, how such moments can also be understood as a *re*constituting practice and made possible through the same processes that are at work during the mundane and everyday is not so clear. What has been referred to in this thesis as 'self-reinforcing violence' will be central in the making of this claim.

Introduced in my fourth chapter and taken from Hugh Ridley's work on a body of literature that portrays European colonial activity and the masculine figures that populate these worlds, Ridley uses the term 'self-justifying violence' to describe acts of colonial violence that emerged not from explicit racial ideologies, but from a perpetrator's own sense of insecurity and disorientation. Self-justifying violence therefore actually works to tell us more about the perpetrator of the violence than its victim, and is produced as much through whites' view of themselves as their views of non-whites. Understood in relation to the violences enacted in Camp Breadbasket and against Mousa, self-justifying violence in these contexts can be read as a liberal warrior's attempt to reassert control and reconstitute their militarised masculine self. A subjectivity forged so intimately in relation to the bodies of Others liberal warriors confront while on an operational tour, a soldier's confusion and anxiety over who they are and what they're doing can easily be projected onto the body of the local population (Razack 2004: 63). And as a subjectivity that is never stable, never fixed, and never complete, uncertainty marks a liberal warrior. Even within the confines of the tightly regulated environment of basic training and barrack living, liberal warrior subjectivities need to continually reiterate and redo their identities in an attempt to secure borders and fixity. As liberal warriors move from their UK bases to conflict zones, they encounter bodies marked by colonial logics and which become the surface upon which a liberal warrior's reconstituting practices are played out upon.

Thus, in Camp Breadbasket, the bodies of Iraqi detainees, already marked by colonial discourses of femininity, (homo)sexual lasciviousness and deviancy, are the site

upon which a liberal warrior's own (homo)sexualised desires and fears are violently played out. The extreme violence meted out by British troops against Mousa meanwhile was both reflected and deflected back on to Mousa himself. It was *his* barbarism, *his* cruelty and *his* lack of control that meant force became the only language that could be used. For the British soldiers questioning Mousa, it was their own benevolence that was at risk, and their own restraint that was risky. Both the abuses at Camp Breadbasket and the violence against Mousa then were 'doings', an attempt at redrawing and restabilising the borders that map a liberal warrior subject. The stylised aesthetic of Camp Breadbasket positioned British soldiers in the role of the dominant masculine penetrator and Iraqi prisoners as feminised and (homo)sexualised subordinates, while the deflection of violence onto Mousa reaffirmed the civility and benevolence of British soldiers. The borders demarcating the homosocial and homosexual, and control and messiness, were reinscribed and concomitantly so too were those that trace the contours of a liberal warrior. It is in these operations the (im)possibility of a liberal warrior is revealed: the self-reinforcing violence both constitutes and pulls apart. A liberal warrior is both (re)made and revealed as fiction.

These obscene violences however, are not exceptional or distinct, but are the specific concretisation – the ghosts – of hauntings that are always already present. While the homosexual potential of soldiers' bodies manifest in their homoerotic and hypersexualised play during basic training, signalling fraternity, male bonding and masculinity, in Camp Breadbasket it sediments in the enforced nakedness and sexualised abuses, marking the Iraqi bodies that perform it as submissive and feminine. While the impossibility of complete control and complete rationality is rendered visible in the small bodily resistances of barrack living and in the chaos and confusion of an operational tour of duty, during Mousa's interrogation the border that marked controlled and legitimate violence from uncontrolled and illegitimate violence was revealed not to be fixed and hard but porous. To view these two moments of militarised violences as separate and disconnected from the everyday resistances, the everyday undoings of a liberal warrior, and everyday breaches of the border is to not pay attention to the ways that hauntings operate always and across multiple sites.

Turning to the violences detailed in my fifth chapter – the violences a liberal warrior endures rather than perpetrates – in this instance also, (im)possibility and connections between the everyday and obscene can be seen to make the violence possible. Like the previous two chapters, this chapter is concerned with the mapping and maintaining of borders. Borders around a personalised and familiarised liberal warrior, borders that mark complicity in the barbarism and cruelty of war as 'outside' this subjectivity, and borders that

demarcate clean and humane violence from that which is beyond the pale of civility. In the everyday doings of a counterinsurgency tour of duty, as well as in the Imperial War Museum's depiction of the Afghanistan conflict, a liberal warrior both remaps these borders and rearticulates their subjectivity. They are (re)mapped in the abiding of strict rules of engagement, in the rhetoric of hearts and minds, and in the use of precise and accurate weaponry and technology. The (im)possibility of a liberal warrior however, means that these doings also reveal the porosity of these borders. For while in the aftermath of an IED explosion the brutality and horror of warfare returns at full force to those who witness it, in the clean and neat violence engaged in by a liberal warrior the blood, torn flesh and eviscerated bodies that are its result remain *un*-visible. Despite this, it remains that it is through the mission of hearts and minds, through the 'soft hat' patrols and *shuras* with village elders, and through the high-technology weapons that such brutality is made possible. The explosion of an IED does not occur in the abstract without any relationality, war is not engaged in without violence and horrors on both sides, even when it is portrayed as a 'gentler' way of war and conducted by 'softer' soldiering subjects. Weapons may be more accurate, stricter controls may be placed on firing, and dialogue may simultaneously take place, it remains however, that what lies on the other side, what is so often attempted to be scripted out and rendered *un*-visible, is the same obscenity of an IED. It is therefore in the very doings of this nation-building war and scripting of the borders of a benign and violence-less liberal warrior, that the subjectivity is simultaneously undone.

While my methodology and the two insights it offers helps explain how specific acts of wartime violence become possible, the answers and conclusions it draws are not neat, precise or singular. Like the subjectivity I have been attempting, and always and necessarily failing, to grasp, the answers are messy, multiple and difficult to get a hold of. A liberal warrior's connections to wartime violences are not causal or straightforward. It is not as simple as contemporary constructions of militarised masculinity are produced through static and unmoving understandings of what a soldier 'is', and these in turn lead to predictable known violences. Indeed, as this thesis has shown, a liberal warrior engages in numerous intimate and contradictory relationships with traits and characteristics that are not located within the (always porous) boundaries tracing the subject. Soldiering recruits will engage in homoerotic and hypersexualised behaviours to prove their heterosexual credentials, while using these same practices to feminise and homosexualise Others. Soldiers demonstrate control and rationality in their physicality, dress and posture during basic training, while this

is necessarily (and literally) cast off during operational tours; the disciplined use of force meanwhile is revealed as context-dependent. Finally, liberal warriors who have embraced a 'new' form soldiering and one that has the needs of the local population at its centre rather than unrestrained violence will still disgorge millions of bullets, call in air strikes, and produce eviscerated bodies, torn flesh and body counts. Furthermore, the violences are in no way predictable or guaranteed. Violences emerge on a continuum and in different forms and with different levels of recognition. And while this thesis has never sought to claim that all who join the military and are shaped by its discourses and practices will engage in the obscene violences that mark this project, all will be produced in relation to violence. For to (attempt to) exclude, fix and deny is a violence in and of itself. It is not the messiness of the subject that produces these violences, but rather, it is in the attempts at expelling the messiness, of stabilising the borders, that they emerge. To seek to produce a subject through expulsion and denial is to produce a subject that will have failure and undoing written into its production. When confronted with this failure, this uncertainty, a liberal warrior will seek to shore up their subjectivity, to 'harden' their boundaries, and it is this that can produce the violent effects this thesis has documented.

WHERE NEXT?

In answering my research question, this thesis has mapped out a specific appropriation of Gordon's work on ghosts and hauntings, constructing a methodological approach that details the ways in which the everyday ways a liberal warrior is (re)produced helps make possible obscene violences of war. By paying attention to ghosts and hauntings the (im)possibility of a soldiering subject is revealed, and the ghostly sedimentations of hauntings that had attempted to be expelled can be tracked across multiple sites, allowing the workings of this (im)possibility to be traced from the banal everyday to the spectacularly violent. However, while my research question has now been answered, what are the wider implications of this research? What are the wider implications of my methodological contribution?

It is addressing these questions that I want to draw my thesis to a close with, pointing towards two specific implications of this research: one that emerges directly from the project itself and one that relates more broadly to feminist IR. The first implication can be termed 'the seduction of a re-scripted militarised masculinity'. This project has focused on the contemporary British military. A military often presumed to be less masculinised, less misogynistic, less homophobic and less violent than their American cousins. It is a military

that, although previously reluctant, in 2000 opened its recruitment arms to openly gay men and women. A move that while being somewhat later than many other western countries, was a full decade before America was to do the same. It is a military that despite remaining overwhelmingly white[162] is presented as having broken from its imperial ambitions and colonial past. No longer do British forces engage in overseas conflict for territory, plunder or influence, rather they do so to improve the lot of others instead of themselves. That while America may have military might and muscle, Britain has the intellectual know-how for dealing with complex counterinsurgency operations. Underlying all of this is the suggestion that British militarised masculinity and the militarism it purports is softer and gentler – a more discreet militarism and a more discreet masculinity. In this reconceptualization, and as my fifth chapter details, violence has been unhinged from the soldiering subject, located outside its borders. What this thesis has revealed however is that below the surface of smiling soft-hatted soldiers and Afghan locals, behind the rhetoric of 'partnership' and 'peacebuilding', violence continues to operate and is made possible through gendered discourses of masculinism, whiteness and an aggressive heterosexuality. Discourses that continue to circulate even when the militarised masculinity being produced is re-shaped, re-moulded and 'improved'. And discourses that continue to construct (im)possible militarised masculine subjects and their violent external effects.

There is then a danger in being seduced by the idea that a militarised masculine subjectivity can be anything other than intimately connected to violence. Such seduction should be treated with caution as to be seduced is to stop paying attention to ghosts and hauntings and to accept things as they are. For example, in order to make claims about a 'new' and 'improved' militarised masculinity, and one disconnected from its gendered, raced and sexualised past, is to allow those within the military and those who it claims to serve, to not have to confront the hauntings of their nation and military's past, and to not have to take notice of the ways in which hauntings (re)emerge today. To be seduced – to point to the homosexual bodies that now populate its ranks, to the language of hearts and minds, and the strict rules of engagement in place – is to have 'proof' that a militarised masculine subjectivity can be re-made and re-moulded in 'better', less violent, more liberal ways. There is a need to be wary of such seduction, because to be seduced is to close down debate and dissent. It is to understand militarised violences as atomised events that operate independently of the discourses that produce the perpetrator (and victim). And it is to believe the full expulsion of hauntings can be achieved, with lines redrawn and 'neatened', or, in the case of a liberal warrior 'softened'. Aaron Belkin has pointed to this "smoothing

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[162] Across the British Armed Forces white personnel make up 92.9% of the total (Basham 2013: 7).

over" of militarised masculinity via women's and minorities' testimonials in the case of the US military (2012: 74), arguing they have played an important role in concealing "contradictions which structure military masculinity and purifying some of its most abject elements" (*ibid.*: 6). Often

> at the receiving end of slander campaigns associated with the warrior ideal… African Americans, women, Jews, Asians, gays and lesbians and others have been stigmatized as diseased, perverted, disloyal, incompetent and weak. When minorities who have been designated as unworthy of serving in uniform in such terms nonetheless depict military masculinity as an unproblematic ideal, their testimonials convey a powerful, if unspoken, message of forgiveness *(ibid.*: 74).

Not only, Belkin argues, do "[t]he sedimented weight of these positive portrayals" help "make it difficult to disable the ideal of military masculinity, [and] the nobility of the military", but they also make it difficult to critique "the legitimacy of empire in American political discourse" (*ibid.*: 75). By allowing homosexuals to openly serve and honouring post-colonial subjects in the ranks[163], what inherent contradictions of British militarised masculinity and its operations abroad are being left unquestioned? What is being missed in allowing a seduction to take place?

In effect, to fail to pay attention to ghosts and hauntings and be seduced by the myth of a stable and complete liberal warrior is a profoundly *de*politicising experience. And given the production and maintenance of a militarised masculine subjectivity is integral to the possibility of, and the way that war is waged, it is inescapably a political project. Furthermore, as I stated in my introduction, my interest in the British military came not just from my own experience as a British citizen, but from continually been told that this is a military that is operating in my name and for my safety. If something is going to operate in my name, and operate in a way that causes devastation and death, I want to address this head-on, to keep questioning, and retain it in the realm of politics. Seduction is comforting as it renders *un*-visible, or at least conceals, the operations and centrality of violence to a militarised masculine subject. Such operations however, should never be depoliticised and should never be made comfortable. It is my hope therefore, that this first implication of my research – a warning against seduction – will contribute towards a troubling and a sense of discomfort in relation to soldiering subjects and their actions in war. Not to automatically or unthinkingly judge their behaviour as wrong or immoral, but to open it up to questioning and to refuse to allow it to become something that 'just happens'. It is only through

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[163] For example, the awarding of Dipprasad Pun the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross (see Chapter Four) or Hennessey's (2012) praising of the ANA.

discomfort that it can remain in the realm of the political, only through a starting-point of discomfort that violence can be unpacked and questioned.

The way in which my methodology resists fixed categories, rests only temporally on its conclusions and tracks across multiple sites, including those often regarded as 'uninteresting' or 'unimportant', means it is both particularly suited to questions of, and reiterates, Cynthia Enloe's call for 'feminist curiosity'. The methodology pays attention to and asks questions about the mundane, the banal, the not-worth-bothering-about, and finds that important linkages can be made between everyday workings of militarised masculinity and obscene operations of violence. My methodology allows for a detailed and precise reading of the intricate workings of gender in all its easily looked over 'doings'. Whether it is in the particular way a soldier washes and dresses himself, the casting off of a uniform in the heat of the desert, or the items a soldier chooses to contribute to a museum exhibition, my methodology asks questions about what is attempted to be excluded in these moments, what borders are being marked and what kind of subjectivity is attempted to be brought into being. It is a methodology that is concerned with uncovering just how much power it takes to make it appear as if gender is not operating in these spaces and to make it as if these practices are not worth paying attention to or have nothing to do with one another. It is also a methodology that does not claim and is not concerned with producing fixed and sure knowledge claims. Rather, it is a methodology that encourages and expects the excess, hauntings will always exceed the stories that are being told. As Annick Wibben has pointed to, feminist interventions into the field of IR and security studies "explode its confines at every turn" (2011: 113). Thus, I am not attempting to claim that this is 'the' feminist method and impose confines on the ways feminist research is carried out. Rather, the theoretical and methodological work of this thesis is another attempt at 'exploding', another way of expanding and approaching feminist questions of IR, and a small, but useful, contribution to a feminist 'toolbox'[164].

There is then a lot at stake in paying close attention to the ways in which a liberal warrior is (re)produced and taking notice of the ghosts and hauntings my methodology reveals. To not pay attention to the gendered, raced and sexualised discourses of difference a soldiering figure is produced in and through is to individualise and pathologise violences

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[164] This wonderfully visual phrase is something I heard Christine Sylvester refer to at the *Touching War* workshop at Lancaster University in 2009.

enacted by and subjected to soldiers. To not recognise ghosts as ghosts, track them through multiple sites, and draw connections between them is to fail to identify the interlocking relations of violence they are produced and rendered visible through. To not do these things is to depoliticise, to stop asking questions and close down debate. It is to ignore that soldiers – like all of us – are (re)produced in and through the social world and are not just acting and operating within it. I would in fact go further and argue that to not give notice to the ways a liberal warrior is produced and the relations of exclusion it engages in is to be implicated in the maintenance and sustaining of a subjectivity that is complicit in so much violence. Violence not only against those marked as 'Other' and located thousands of miles away in the battlespaces of Iraq and Afghanistan, but also violence directed towards bodies marked as militarised and masculine itself[165]. A militarised masculine subjectivity does not mean that soldiers are the 'bad guys' – soldiers after all experience the violent and negative effects of haunting themselves, or rather, they experience the violent and negative effects of attempts made to conceal and paper over hauntings. There is then a real imperative to pay attention to this subjectivity, and not let its operations and (re)productions go unnoticed or without critique.

At its core this has been a project about the exclusions and denials at the centre of a liberal warrior, and the range of violences that emerge from a masculine subjectivity defined and made possible (yet simultaneously always failing) by what it is not. And as long as disavowal and rejection remain at its centre, it will remain a subjectivity that cannot be re-moulded or re-scripted in ways that will avoid violent external effects. Thus, I want to finish with an appeal to remain attentive to the subtle and discreet ways a violent and exclusionary militarised masculinity can re-emerge. It is comforting to imagine it could somehow be re-imagined in such a way that would no longer trouble claims to benevolence and compassion. And it would take less effort, less energy, less feminist curiosity to not continually have to question it, unpack it, track it, politicise its actions, and pay attention to its banal, mundane, routine behaviours. However, to do this is to not ask wider questions about the workings of gender, race, sexuality and power in international politics. It is to accept that, to a greater or lesser extent, violent effects are inevitable: unpalatable, yes, but inevitable too. Both gender and violence are "slippery" (Zalewski 2013: 20) concepts, as are their relations to one another. Paying attention to ghosts and hauntings offers one way of grabbing onto them –

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[165] Although outside the remit of this project, there are also suggestions that higher levels of domestic abuse occur within military households. For example a study by the probation officers' union, Napo, provides strong evidence "of a direct link between the mental health of those returning from combat zones, chronic alcohol and drug abuse and domestic violence" (Travis 2009). It should be noted however, that figures on this are extremely difficult to accurately collect.

albeit only temporally – and revealing their connections. Keeping attuned to ghostly matters therefore provides something of an intervention, a pause, to the ways gender, power and violence circulate and shape international politics.

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