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Popular culture, the body and world politics

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Abstract

Popular culture is widely understood to intersect with and shape our understanding of world politics. Numerous studies have highlighted the way language and imagery from literature, drama, film, television and other sites of cultural production make their way into political discourses on geopolitics, terrorism, immigration, globalisation and arms control, to name a few. Conversely, world events, especially international crises, provide rich materials for popular culture across mediums and genres. This interchange has often been understood through the theory of intertextuality, which highlights the way the meaning and authority of any text is established by drawing on, or positioning against, other texts from the surrounding culture. This article develops an account of intertextuality that takes seriously the embodied dimensions of popular culture and political discourse. Revisiting the work of Julia Kristeva, I argue that a framework binding together bodies, discourses and social practices offers a promising avenue for International Relations scholars grappling with the embodied aspects of intertextuality. The article explores the implications and potential of this conceptualisation through a case analysis of the sport–war intertext and spectacular war. In doing so, it demonstrates that the legitimising effects ordinarily understood to accompany intertextuality are intensified when bodily drives, impulses and affect are taken into account.

Keywords

Discourse, body, practice, sport, ~~terrorism~~, ~~intertextuality~~

Introduction

Things began well, with a moving ceremony commemorating the firefighters who had lost their lives and honouring local firefighters who had gone to New York afterward to help out. There was even a lot of cheering when the Yankees took the field, a highly unusual transcendence of

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local attachments. As the game went on and the beer flowed, one increasingly heard ‘U-S-A, U-S-A’ echoing the chant from the 1980s Olympic hockey match in which the United States defeated Russia. This chant seemed to express the wish for America to defeat, abase, and humiliate its enemies. Indeed it soon became a general way of expressing the desire to crush one’s enemies, whoever they were. When an umpire made a bad call against the Sox, the same group turned towards him chanting ‘U-S-A’. In other words, anyone who crosses us is evil and must be crushed.

Martha Nussbaum, 2001

Popular culture is widely understood to intersect with and shape our understanding of world politics. Numerous studies have highlighted the way language and imagery from literature, drama, film, television and many other sites of cultural production make their way into political discourses on geopolitics, terrorism, immigration, globalisation and arms control, among many others. Conversely, world events, especially international crises, provide rich materials for popular culture across mediums and genres.¹ This interchange has often been understood by International Relations (IR) scholars through the theory of intertextuality, which highlights the way the meaning and authority of any text is established by drawing on, or positioning against, other texts from the surrounding culture. At stake here is the cultural production of political legitimacy, as well as the possibility of contestation and resistance. For instance, an intertextual analysis might point out how various texts that comprise a foreign policy discourse draw from the surrounding political culture, mobilising widely shared values and assumption, and rendering particular perspectives intelligible. While this literature is well established and, in many respects, incisive, it has mainly focused on textual representation. Yet, as the opening quote from Martha Nussbaum suggests, the interchange between popular culture and world politics often exceeds the boundaries of cultural artefacts and representational practices. Nussbaum’s (2001) reflection on a post-9/11 baseball game at Chicago’s famous Comiskey Park explicitly highlights the bodily dimensions of intertextuality, as empathy and compassion gave way to ‘us versus them thinking’ and sports spectatorship intersected with deep cultural scripts rooted in the darkest hours of the Cold War. Here, intertextuality was practised en masse and spontaneously; it was imbricated with the surge of the crowd, the momentum of the game, exhilaration and adulation, rage and disdain; it even had something to do with the consumption of beer.

Of course, as Michael Shapiro (1989a: 70) **[AQ: 1]** noted in his groundbreaking treatment of intertextuality in IR, ‘the leaves of the sport and war texts have been sifted together in human society for centuries’. While Shapiro’s analysis of the sport–war intertext is compelling, the bodily register remains implicit, captured, for instance, in his reflections on the historical evolution of sports culture, including long-run processes of bourgeoisification that have shaped bodies and social practices alike (Shapiro, 1989a: 76–85). Such concerns are largely absent from later IR scholarship on intertextuality, where textual artefacts like books, television programmes, speeches and policy documents are systematically analysed for traces of the other texts that constitute and legitimise them. To point this out is not to dismiss this research, which has often been illuminating and persuasive. Instead, the point is to highlight the significance of the body and think about how it might be better understood as part of intertextual meaning-making processes.

In doing so, this article takes seriously a growing literature that shows how the body is central to world politics. This research foregrounds ‘deeply political bodies, constituted in reference to historical political conditions while at the same time acting upon the world’ (Wilcox, 2015: 3). What emerges is a body that is fleshy, corporeal and precarious; entangled with discourses and materials and other bodies; ~~and~~-alive with emotions, affects, drives, impulses and habits (see, e.g., Åhäll, 2018a; Davies and Chisolm, 2018; Fishel, 2017; Wilcox, 2015). As I have indicated already, sites of popular cultural production like sport, literature, the cinema and television are often drawn into politics not simply rhetorically, but with deep bodily force. Yet, the fulsome body just described is not often captured in intertextual analyses of such interchanges.

One way to begin thinking past this disconnect is to note that Julia Kristeva has been an influential primary source (though in different ways) for IR scholars writing on both intertextuality and the body. On the one hand, Kristeva coined the term ‘intertextuality’ and is widely cited in conceptual and methodological explanations of the concept (e.g. Hansen, 2006). On the other hand, Kristeva’s engagement with the body and language, particularly her later work on the abject, have been taken up by IR scholars interested in unsettling the subject and showing that bodies are always in the process of becoming (e.g. Wilcox, 2015). This article opens up new terrain for thinking through the bodily dimension of intertextuality by bringing these two aspects of Kristeva’s oeuvre into conversation. It then builds on this new ground via several of Kristeva’s most interesting interlocutors and a case analysis of the body in the sport–war intertext.

I suggest a framework that binds together bodies, discourses and social practices. Here, intertextuality involves references not simply to other texts from the surrounding culture, but also to the universe of experience that those other texts are implicated in. I make this dynamic palpable by revisiting the sport–war intertext and foregrounding the embodied experience of spectatorship. After 9/11, sport and war were mixed together in the US at major sporting events and in the media presentation of military operations. My analysis highlights the depth and significance of sports spectatorship as a social practice, explains how body and discourse are drawn together in that context, and demonstrates their simultaneous intertextual evocation in the popular reckoning with the War on Terror. More broadly, I contend that the bodily register is inseparable from the intertextual production of meaning and that this further imbricates the legitimising effects identified by many IR scholars as a key political consequence of intertextuality. At the same time, I show that the bodily register can destabilise intertextuality when its evocation is weak or in tension with the context. What is clear throughout it that bodies are iteratively reproduced through ongoing encounters with a network of norm-laden discourses that are drawn together intertextually in numerous configurations and contexts.

The article begins by outlining the most common approach to intertextuality in IR and highlighting the gap with regard to the body. The second section connects Kristeva’s account of intertextuality with her work on the body and language, and then suggests a framework that brings the body back to the heart of intertextuality. The case study shows the practical significance of this conceptualisation by exploring the confluence of sport and war after 9/11. Extrapolating on Shapiro’s rich engagement with this subject matter, it traces the long-run cultural-historical significance of sporting practices for the produc-

tion of certain sorts of bodies. It then connects that account with the War on Terror context and the recurring phenomenon of the ‘U-S-A’ chant queued up by Nussbaum.

Intertextuality and IR

Intertextual approaches first appeared in IR in the late 1980s, in train with the ‘linguistic turn’ and the arrival of post-structuralism (~~Shapiro, 1989a, 1989b~~). Since then, it has been mobilised primarily to analyse the intersection of popular culture and world politics. Examples include analyses of science fiction and fantasy in political discourse (Neumann and Kiersey, 2013; Neumann and Nexon, 2006; Weldes, 1999, 2001, 2003); travel writing, cartoons and comic books in the narrative construction of conflict (Guillaume, 2011; Hansen, 2006, 2011, 2017; Lisle, 2006); and, of course, the interrelationship between sport and war (Shapiro, 1989a). While early contributions from scholars like Michael Shapiro exhibit a nuanced appreciation for the materiality of discourse, critical IR research more commonly positions intertextuality as a way of analysing representational practices as they manifest in specific cultural artefacts (Aradau and Huysmans, 2014).

Lene Hansen (2006) gives perhaps the most comprehensive account of intertextual analysis in her incisive examination of post-structuralist research methods, which she demonstrates through a detailed case study of the Bosnian conflict. Hansen (2006: 49–58) situates intertextuality as a quality of discourse (extending a two-chapter explication elucidating the co-constitution of self and other, identity and discourse, as well as the social production of foreign policy) and as a mode of systematic analysis that can be brought to bear on foreign policy texts. It is worth reproducing Hansen (2006: 49) at some length here since this is an important touchstone:

Texts are simultaneously unique and united: each makes its own particular construction of identity, weaves a series of differentiations and juxtapositions, and couples them to a spatially, temporally, and ethically situated foreign policy. Yet, the inimitability of every individual text is always located within a shared textual space; all texts make references, explicitly or implicitly, to previous ones, and in doing so they both establish their own reading and become mediations of the meaning of others. The meaning of the text is thus never fully given by the text itself, but is always a product of other readings and interpretations. This process, coined by Julia Kristeva with the concept of intertextuality, highlights that texts are situated within and against other texts, that they draw upon them in constructing their identities and policies, that they appropriate as well as revise the past, and that they build authority by reading and citing that of others. It points analytically, politically, and empirically to seeing official foreign policy texts — statements, speeches, and interviews — not as entities standing separately from wider societal discourses but as entities located within a larger textual web; a web that both includes and goes beyond other policy texts, into journalism, academic writing, popular non-fiction, and, potentially, even fiction.

The focus here is on the way the meaning and authority of foreign policy is established not just through the intent of an author, but in relation to pre-existing textual materials in the surrounding culture. For Hansen (2006: 51–57), it points towards the necessity of a systematic examination of ‘official discourse’, where intertextuality legitimises official

perspectives; ‘wider foreign policy debates’, where hegemony might be exerted or transformed; and ‘cultural representations’, where particular identities and ideologies might be reproduced and maintained or contested.² An intertextual analysis of these sources would identify explicit intertexts, like quotations and references, and implicit intertexts, like secondary material, conceptual legacies and specific colloquialisms, and then trace them back through their various manifestations in the wider culture, paying attention to assumptions, exclusions and political commitments (Hansen, 2006: 51). Hansen builds on this account to develop a rigorous approach to intertextual analysis that is then incorporated into a wider research design; however, for our purposes, it is the persistent focus on textual artefacts that is important. It is the world constituted through texts — ranging from official documents to television programmes and comic books, including their aesthetic elements — that is the object of analysis.³

This emphasis on textual representation is common across IR research deploying the intertextual method. There are conceptual differences here centred mainly on the relationship between text and society: some see textual artefacts as the extension of pervasive ideological conditions, in the Althusserian sense (e.g. Shapiro, 1989a); while others see them as emerging from the available cultural materials but distinct from an underlying social structure, the existence of which is rejected (e.g. Neumann and Kiersey, 2013; Weldes, 2003). Yet, all agree that textual representations are worth analysing for the extent to which they influence widely held perceptions of politics, make possible certain ways of thinking and help to produce and normalise particular political perspectives (Weldes and Laffey, 2004: 28–30).

As fruitful as IR research on intertextuality has been, it often leaves to one side dimensions of the meaning-making process that are non-representational. In the example of the sport–war intertext, the established approach would pay close attention to the discursive and aesthetic interchange. Such an analysis would likely highlight the presence of sports talk in high-level representations of military conflict (Herbeck, 2004; Jansen and Sabo, 1994; Stahl, 2009). It might dwell, for instance, on US General David Petraeus’s description of the strategic situation at the beginning of the Iraq ‘surge’ in Gridiron parlance: ‘we are a long way from the goal line, but we do have the ball and we are driving down field’ (Russett, 2007). It might also focus in on the pervasiveness of sports talk at the level of strategy, where ‘game plans’ are common and events take place on ‘level playing field[s]’ or as part of ‘the great game’. It would ~~also~~ no doubt analyse the statements of national security officials and principals, like US President Barak Obama, who described his foreign policy doctrine in the language of Baseball: ‘you hit singles, you hit doubles; every once in a while we may be able to hit home runs’ (Allen, 2014). Yet, this kind of analysis would not capture the bodily register that often pertains at the intersection between sport and international conflict. It would not capture the racing pulse of a spectator as jets scream off aircraft carriers towards football stadium flyovers or ‘shock and awe’ bombardments of foreign capitals, nor the interweaving of body and text so evident in Nussbaum’s account of the ‘U-S-A’ chant after 9/11.

Space for thinking about these bodily dimensions in IR has been opened up by recent engagements with the new materialism, as well as a burgeoning appreciation of the way emotions are implicated in world politics. The former has emphasised a tendency to distinguish between the material world and the discourse through which it is represented

— positioning the non-representational outside of discourse or extraneous to it (Connolly, 2013; Dittmer, 2014; Fishel, 2017; Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams, 2015). The latter has emphasised the not-unrelated persistence of a division between mind and body, where the mind occupies the high ground of cognitive-linguistic meaning making and the body issues forth unmediated impulses that impinge on that higher function (Crawford, 2000; Hutchison, 2016; Hutchison and Bleiker, 2014; Koschut, 2014; Mercer, 2010).⁴ Both pose a challenge to representational theories prominent in critical IR, to the extent that they point beyond the discursive and aesthetic towards other dimensions of the human condition that may impact on meaning making and the political.

Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams (2015) offer one promising route forward by emphasising a richer account of discourse, which they characterise as ‘radical intertextuality’. They revisit Foucault and Derrida to show that discourse need not separate the material from the discursive and aesthetic. Take Foucault’s account of disciplinary power and the coercion of deviant bodies into useful social roles, which took place across the later part of the 18th century (Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams, 2015: 19). Punishment, correction, training, surveillance, the very architecture of prisons, were entwined with the emergence of categories of language and norms of conduct. What is crucial in this approach is that we are directed beyond a division between body and discourse. Instead, space is opened up for thinking about how the body might be always already entwined with intertextuality. The next section builds on these approaches by affirming the body as a crucial presence in the meaning-making process. I do this by revisiting Julia Kristeva and, in particular, her work beyond intertextuality, which was often concerned with the relationship between the body and language.

Intertextuality and the body

Julia Kristeva is routinely cited in IR literature as a key theorist of intertextuality — a term she coined in a short essay titled ‘Word, dialogue and novel’ (Kristeva, 1980), where she translated and synthesised the work of Russian literary theorist M.M. Bakhtin. To the extent that Kristeva is influential for IR scholars using this method, the main thrust comes from a handful of pages and several oft-cited passages. Here, texts are positioned ‘as an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue amongst several writings’ (Kristeva, 1980: 65). On this account, ‘any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption or transformation of another’ (Kristeva, 1980: 66). Yet, Kristeva was concerned with much more than intertextuality in her wider intellectual enterprise. This section explores Kristeva’s understanding of the relationship between body and language. It highlights fresh terrain for thinking about the bodily aspects of intertextuality and suggests a framework that brings the body back in. Two aspects of Kristeva’s work are especially relevant: her engagement with the way bodily drives are discharged through rhythms and tones of language; and her work on the abject.

Kristeva’s treatment of bodily drives in language is outlined, first and foremost, in *Revolution in Poetic Language* (Kristeva, 1984). Her account centres on a distinction between the symbolic (by which she means the formal grammatical structures that govern the way words are organised into coherent language) and the semiotic (by which she means

the tones and rhythms that adhere in language; its musicality and poetic elements) (Kristeva, 1984: 13–24).⁵ The semiotic is where the body comes in, straightforwardly, at one level, since tones and rhythms are plainly meaningful components of voice in speech. Kristeva (1984: 19–90) deepens this connection by positing that bodily drives are discharged through the semiotic elements of language. She associates these bodily drives with the early developmental stages where the psyche is formed (Kristeva, 1984: 13–24).

The important point for Kristeva's conceptualisation of meaning making (what she calls 'signification') is that it requires both the semiotic and the symbolic to function. The symbolic provides the rule-governed basis for language, without which it would be merely incoherent sounds; the semiotic provides the motive to speak and is what makes language meaningful (Oliver, 1997: xi–xv). While signification always requires both elements, either could be in the ascendancy. However, Kristeva argued that signification (under the sway of positivist scientism and the reifying effects of capitalism) is now overwhelmingly symbolic (Moi, 1986: 13–17). In that context, she pursued the radical potential of poetic language, where the semiotic was accentuated and the possibility of heterogeneous meaning presented an opportunity for new forms of subjectivity and expression (Doty, 2004: 84–86). The important point here is that the body and language are inextricably linked in meaning making. As Kristeva (1984: 17) explains: 'What we call significance, then, is precisely this unlimited and unbounded general process, this unceasing operation of the drives towards, in, and through language; towards, in, and through the exchange system and its protagonists — the subject and his institutions.' Here, bodily drives are associated with language, but also the 'subject and his institutions', which shape and mediate these drives, allowing semiotic heterogeneity in some contexts and repressing it in others.

This account of the body and language is complicated by Kristeva's later work on the abject, which is more familiar to IR scholars (Debrix, 2017; Gregory, 2015; Wilcox, 2015). Her treatment of the abject focuses on the way coherent, bounded identity is produced through the repression and exclusion of things that undermine it — in effect, corporeality, the body's leakiness and continuity with its surrounds, all that blurs the boundary between inside and out, identity and difference (Kristeva, 1982: 1–31). Here, intense bodily experiences (nausea, revulsion, discomfort, even desire) are drawn together with the symbolic universe in a 'twisted braid of affect and thought' (Kristeva, 1982: 1). The abject has its origins in a dynamic familiar to psychoanalytic accounts of identity formation, where the separation of child and mother is an engine for self–other relations, both of desire for that initial lack and as animus projected onto that which challenges the coherence of identity. In this context, Kristeva (1982: 3) explores the bodily reaction triggered by encounters with experiences that complicate and confound neat distinctions between inside and outside — a reaction characterised by violent bodily rejection. The abject is inseparable not just from the mediation of a leaky and unstable body, but also from the mediation of wider categories of signification that may be problematic for the coherency of a particular identity and its associate system of values (Kristeva, 1982: 4). Indeed, Kristeva's account of bodily boundary maintenance has provoked incisive analysis of the broader processes through which other forms of identity and difference are produced, including around gender, race and class (Butler, 1999: 170–171).

So far, this section has foregrounded the bodily concerns of Kristeva's wider scholarship. Both the discharge of heterogeneous bodily drives through the rhythms and tones of language and the bodily experience of a symbolic universe that can affirm and unsettle identity indicate the inseparability of body and language in Kristeva's thinking. Indeed, in her later work, Kristeva developed an account of what she called the 'subject in progress', explicitly situated at the intersection of body and text, where the potential for discourse to extinguish agency is confounded by drives and impulses that exceed the symbolic order and enable innovation, creation and renewal (Jabri, 1998: 608; ~~see also~~ Doty, 2004: 84–86). It should be clear that any account of intertextuality that integrates Kristeva's broad-ranging engagement with the body would have to take seriously not just 'a mosaic of quotations', but also a mosaic of bodily experiences as the meaning of a text is produced by subjects immersed in particular cultural-ideological contexts.

Discourse, body, practice: Intertextuality reprised

I want to finish this section by suggesting an account of intertextuality that builds on Kristeva's wider engagement with the body. An obvious starting point is to foreground the embodied subject's unavoidable centrality in the constitution of textual meaning — a connection made explicit by Roland Barthes (1977) in his famous essay 'The death of the author'. Kristeva's mentor and intellectual fellow traveller, Barthes is also an important primary source for theories of intertextuality, although he is less cited in the IR literature on this issue.⁶ According to Barthes (1977: 148):

A text is made up of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody and contestation, but there is one place where that unity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto thought, the author.

Barthes helps focus attention on the individual embodied subject, who brings meaning and coherency to the multiplicity of intertextual references contained in any text: 'a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination' (Barthes, 1977: 148). What I am pointing to is a distinction between an account that positions discourse 'out there' in words and images, and an account that locates discourse 'in here', as shared meaning held by embodied subjects, who interpret, react, create, suppress, reject and so on, across all the registers of human experience. From this perspective, we can never think of discourse apart from the body. Any time humans make meaning, the body is at the centre of things.⁷

This move shifts the focus away from the properties of particular cultural artefacts and places it instead on embodied subjects involved in the same cultural-ideological context. It also expands the meaning of 'text', such that any aspect of the world can be read as text through the application of the subject's shared meaning (see Gregory, 1989: x–xxi; Shapiro, 1989b: 1–22). As Barthes (1972: 15–25) explained, this is why the crowd at a wrestling match can unanimously understand the conflict as a justice pageant (complete with heroes and villains, tragedy and catharsis) despite the discursive silence of the competitors. Of course, the crowd cheers and curses, rides waves of tension and drama, feels the exhilaration of victory and the dismay of defeat as they engage with and interpret the pageantry.

I want to now build on this account of embodied subjects involved in intertextual meaning making. First, I explain how bodily experiences can be evoked intertextually. I do this by revisiting Kristeva's primary source for the concept of intertextuality, M.M. Bakhtin, and, in particular, his explanation of the way language is shaped by social practice. Second, I take seriously Judith Butler's critique of what she sees as Kristeva's underlying essentialism. Butler's subsequent reformulation of semiotics and the abject allows us to position bodily experience as another register of legitimisation at play in the intertextual constitution of meaning.

So, how is the body evoked intertextually? Kristeva suggests an answer when she points to the way institutional context can shape the extent to which the semiotic element of language is present. For instance, poetic language allows rhythm, rhyme, tone and musicality, whereas the techno-rationalist language of bureaucracy leaves no such space. Likewise, Kristeva indicates that coherent identity is affirmed in some settings and challenged in others — and that powerful bodily reactions pertain along all the major social fissures, including gender, race and class.

Bakhtin provides a helpful way of accentuating this connection between body, language and context by emphasising how social practices involve specific idioms and styles of language.⁸ Key here is the idea of heteroglossia, which is often understood to refer to the multiplicity of voices behind words and texts — a clear analogue to intertextuality (Irwin, 2004: 227–228). Yet, it also articulates a more comprehensive tension between the centripetal and centrifugal dimensions of language, between the unifying tendency of a general language system and resistance against it, which arises when language is actually used as speech in dialogue with others. As Michael Holquist (1981: xxi) explains:

[For Bakhtin,] there is no such thing **as** a 'general language', a language that is spoken by a general voice, that may be divorced from a specific saying, which is charged with specific overtones. Language, when it means, is somebody talking to somebody else, even when that someone else is one's own inner addressee.

In order to capture the 'specific saying' and the 'specific overtone' of 'somebody talking to somebody else', Bakhtin highlighted how language is shaped by genre. In his understanding, genre relates to the way language is used in specific social contexts — by profession, generation, cultural scene, social strata, particular activity and so on. In this sense, according to Bakhtin (1986: 85), genres are 'the drive belts from the history of society to the history of language'. From this perspective, intertextuality entails the quotation in any text of multiple genre-specific references drawn not simply from the wider culture, but from the discursive inventory of specific social practices.⁹

The significance of genre language for the body is made clear by Judith Butler, one of Kristeva's most interesting contemporary critics. Butler's engagement with Kristeva begins with what she sees as Kristeva's problematic essentialism, especially around the notion of a pre-discursive maternal body that nevertheless has a teleology and normative character (Butler, 1999: 101–118). However, Butler does not dismiss Kristeva out of hand. Instead, she reframes Kristeva's account of the body and language through the concept of performativity, which refers to the way a discourse can produce the

thing of which it speaks (Butler, 1999: 115–119). Butler (1999: 118–119) argues that what Kristeva sees as archaic drives associated with the maternal body are actually constituted by dominant discourses on the body. Instead of the semiotic being a site of revolutionary potential, it is recast as a deep bodily aspect of the hegemonic heteronormative order. Likewise, instead of a naturalistic basis in human psychology, Butler (1999: 170–171) situates the abject in relation to the social production of a certain sort of self, based in a distinct cultural-ideological context. She characterises the abject as the ‘constitutive other’, consisting of those things that exceed and unsettle the normative parameters ascribed to the self, which are positioned as antithetical and then suppressed and opposed in the process of self-affirmation (Butler, 1999: 170–171; see also Wilcox, 2015: 84–86). In this sense, the abject is recast as the necessary opposite, essential to the production of a particular self and its associated value system. Butler, then, makes two key points contra Kristeva: first, the body is performatively constituted through the norm-laden discourses of a particular cultural-ideological context; and, second, bodily drives and self–other dynamics legitimise and support that cultural-ideological context.

At the same time, Butler does not dismiss the material reality of the body, or reassert an over-determining role for discourse. She suggests a relationship between a corporeal body and a discourse that seeks to contain, shape and direct it through continuous iterations of performative constitution across innumerable sites within any culture (for instance, around the patriarchal family, reproduction and child-rearing). And she suggests some aspects of the body that cannot, ultimately, be contained: that exceed the normative criteria that articulate libidinal economies connecting body to language; that exist beyond the normative production of a certain sort of self and its constitutive other. This account makes clear the role that social practices play in producing the body, while leaving space for agency, as well as a wider gamut of pre-discursive influences that do not rise to the level of articulation.

Drawing these Kristevian interlocutors together, the following framework suggest a way to bring the body back to the heart of intertextuality:

1. A subject’s embodied experiences are bound together with specific forms of discourse via distinct social practices.
2. Any intertextual reference has the potential to evoke a bodily resonance in subjects.
3. The extent and intensity of the resonance will depend on the subject’s involvement in the underlying social practice.
 - a. Kristeva and Butler focus on the deep social practices of reproduction, child-rearing, the family and identity formation. These produce intense and recurring connections, particularly around gender. However, social practices can be as wide-ranging and varied as recreation, diplomacy and political violence.
 - b. The affect of materiality beyond discourse is also bound up with underlying social practices. Participants are habituated with material regularities, processes and environments that act on the body in diffuse and sometimes imperceptible ways.¹⁰

- c. Every intertext takes place in the context of some social practice or another. The bodily register is always already engaged.
4. An intertext can be stabilised/destabilised by the bodily resonance produced in interpreting subjects. If the underlying social practice is widely subscribed, then the stabilisation/destabilisation may be especially powerful.
5. The bodily aspect of intertextuality stabilises/destabilises wider discursive formations.

This framework positions social practices as the crucible where bodies and discourses are fused. Social practices — like sport, for instance — involve lexicons of terminology, well-known sayings and reference points; a common history of highs and lows, drama and controversy; rituals and regularities that relate subjects, moments and likely futures; and, implicit in all these things, norms that delineate good and bad, right and wrong, normal and otherwise along all the major social cleavages. The body, inseparably implicated, is imbibed in this context over and over, including recurring encounters with particular environments and physical processes, and the performative production of certain sorts of bodies, drives, impulses, habits, identities and affects. When a reference is drawn intertextually into another setting, it is this universe of experience that is referenced. An intertextual analysis that takes the body seriously must begin by examining the relevant social practices, with a particular emphasis on the historical-sociological dynamics that connect body and discourse. Focused case-study work can then situate specific intertexts within that wider context and foreground the way the bodily register is implicated.¹¹

At this point, a key issue needs to be addressed head on: how can the bodily dimension of intertextuality be analysed empirically? The unavoidable starting point must be that human understanding, including of our own bodies, is mediated, so the ‘body-in-itself’ is beyond our purview. The best route towards the bodily register is through close analysis of discursive materials that engage that experience, a task that can be undertaken through a variety of methods.¹² It is perhaps an irony that an approach that seeks to supplement *mere* representation with a bodily dimension should then rely on representations for its evidentiary base. However, this misses the extent to which the body is always already involved in discursivity, interpretation and the ceaseless production of meaning — as I have been explaining from Kristeva on down. In this sense, the aim is to accentuate the bodily register at play in an intertext, including the way non-discursive affects are perceived to have impacted the meaning-making process. That aim is buttressed when close analysis of case material is read against the deep context of the social practices in question.

Spectator sports warfare after 9/11

The article has so far opened up space for the body in the intertextual process and suggested a framework that binds together discourses, bodies and social practices. However, what does this amount to in practice? By way of demonstration, I return to where the article started: the confluence of spectatorship and international conflict in the US after 9/11. I begin by exploring the social practice of spectatorship in the context of the

sport–war intertext. I then show how the bodily aspect of intertextuality helped legitimise the prevailing view of the War on Terror, with reference to the recurring phenomenon of the ‘U-S-A’ chant.¹³

A useful starting point here is Colin McInnes’s (2002) provocative suggestion that contemporary warfare is experienced by the citizens of Western liberal democracies in much the same way as the Olympic Games or some other international sporting event. In McInnes’s (2002: 2–3) view:

When western states use force, they do so from afar, involving only directly a limited number of representatives on the battlefield. Society no longer directly participates; it is a spectacle from a distance. Like sports spectators, westerners exhibit different levels of engagement, from those who watch unmoved and soon forget, to those who follow events, personalities, tactics and strategies closely and empathise strongly with what is happening.

McInnes’s observation is certainly applicable to the US context. The revolution of military affairs is specifically aimed at low casualty rates, minimal collateral damage and swift victory in view of public reticence about wars of choice. Of course, McInnes is not alone in diagnosing this shift (see Ignatieff, 2000; Kaldor, 1999; Lutwak, 1995; Mandelbaum, 1999). And the spectacular character of mediated violence has been a major theme in this literature, famously foregrounded by Baudrillard’s (1995) seemingly audacious assessment that the ‘Gulf War did not take place’. What he meant was that the audience’s experience of the conflict was a simulated reality produced by mass-mediated real-time images and recycled cable news feeds.¹⁴

While, on one level, spectator sports warfare can be understood as a straightforward analogy, the more interesting point is that McInnes identifies a convergence between the popular experience of sport and war centred on spectatorship. Here, the spectacle is positioned as a feature of late capitalism, where consumer culture and specialisation have combined with mass mediation to structure the social body in particular ways (Debord, 1992; Guttman, 1981, 1986; McInnes, 2002; Shapiro, 1989a: 84–86). The rhetorical interchange is fairly seamless: ‘sports virtuosos, spectators, amateurs, professionals ... [are all] participants in the discursive economies that create and orient modern social and political reality’ (Shapiro, 1989a: 81). Taking the same ideological conditions seriously, we can associate some identities with statesmen, politicians, generals and soldiers — the professionals — and distinguish these from the wider population, who consume the spectacle of international conflict, rally around the flag and support the troops (Mandelbaum, 2018). I explore the ensuing intertextual dynamics in depth later, but in line with the preceding conceptualisation, it is crucial to first describe the traction and potency of sports spectatorship as a widely shared social practice that embodied subjects engage with and are shaped by.

Spectatorship as social practice

Some sense of the significance of sports spectatorship as a social practice is gained when one considers that in 2015, more than 114.4 million people watched the National Football League (NFL) Super Bowl, making it the most-watched broadcast in US television history

(Patten, 2018). Nor was this an outlier: the ‘big game’ fills nine of the 10 most-viewed broadcasts in US television history (Patten, 2018; Peralta, 2015). Beyond viewer numbers and ratings, Michael Mandelbaum (2018) gives a powerful sense of the cultural significance attached to the Super Bowl as a mass-mediated event:

while television is often said to have a fragmenting, atomizing impact on society, directing the individual’s attention to the screen rather than to other people, the Super Bowl has the opposite effect: It not only provides an occasion for social gatherings, it supplies one of the most widely shared experiences in American life, the subject of countless conversations in homes, workplaces, and elsewhere, among people of all ages, occupations, and educational backgrounds.

Of course, this is only one, albeit significant, game on the American sporting calendar. Taken together, sport spectatorship is widely regarded by scholars and commentators alike as the most pervasive social practice in US popular culture. As David Rowe (2002) explains in relation to what he calls ‘the media–sports–cultural complex’, in the US ‘just about every sentient human being ... willingly or unwillingly, must in some way come to terms with the sporting behemoth’. According to Stephen Pope (1993: 328), ‘the widespread popularity of institutionalised sport not only provides a central reference point in daily conversations, but also helps popularise an interlocking set of cultural ideas about America and its place in the world’.

At play are powerful dynamics of belonging and solidarity, differentiation and rivalry, personal and collective identity, including around class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, as well as spatial markers like city, region or nation. The body is inseparable from these webs of meaning. At the most basic level, the sheer act of barracking for a team — at the ground or around a TV — involves affective dynamics, including moments of tension and catharsis, exuberance and dismay, optimism and frustration, and so on. Pulses race and stomachs sink. Infused in all these bodily moments are the drives, impulses and libidinal economies identified via Kristeva in the preceding sections, not least when rhythms and tones and poetics of language are mobilised en masse in the chants and songs at the heart of team traditions. Underlying all these bodily experiences is the performative constitution of bodies in and through the social practice of sport spectatorship and the discourse through which it is articulated.

Of course, US sporting practices have historical depth and cultural significance that go far beyond surveys of popularity or spectator experience — and it is here that we can get a realistic sense of how the body is bound up with sports spectatorship. While Michael Shapiro’s (1989a) classic analysis of the sport–war intertext sought to elucidate representational practices in strategic discourse, he built this up on a remarkable exploration of the evolution of Anglo-American sporting culture that embeds it in social dynamics of centralisation and resistance, which have played out around major ‘cleavages’ in the ‘social body’. For Shapiro (1989a: 79), ‘[t]he modern sports discourse (and consciousness) is explicable only when we realise that what we have as a sport reflects who we are and further that who we are is constituted as a set of practices, sporting practices among others’.

There is no room here to detail the rich historical trajectories that Shapiro develops; however, what is directly relevant is his acknowledgement that the evolution of sporting

practices involved the active participation of embodied subjects, who constituted and were shaped by such activities. This presence is explicit when Shapiro (1989a: 70–1, 76–85) references the resistance to authority manifested through irreverent and unruly village games; the moderation of hyper-masculine aggression through the social norms structuring football hooliganism; the way sports discourse helped articulate the identity of British soldiers during the First World War; or the dynamics of control and release common to modern factory workers and sports professionals (whose performances now fill out the leisure time of the broader workforce).

Implicitly, though perhaps incisively, Shapiro (1989a: 72, 82–3) indicates the long-run significance of sporting practices for embodied subjectivity when he draws on the sociological perspective of Norbert Elias, who traces the process of ‘bourgeoisification’ that transformed disparate and parochial sports cultures into a centralised and rule-governed affair, amenable to spectators, gamblers and commercial interests. What Shapiro only touches on is that Elias was also concerned with a wider ‘civilising process’ through which he explored the transformation of individual behaviour in relation to evolving social standards (for instance, on sexual expression, bodily function and etiquette) from medieval Europe to the modern period (Elias, 1994; Elias and Dunning, 1986). Andrew Linklater (2014: 576) has foregrounded the way this evolution also involved changing standards for the understanding and expression of anger. In particular, he is interested in the relationship between emotions like shame and embarrassment and changes in the social structure over time as it relates to one of the central concerns of IR: the dynamics of war and peace, antagonism and cooperation, among states¹⁵ (Linklater, 2017). We can discern here the way similar structural forces may have shaped both conflict and sport. However, for the moment, what Elias (and implicitly Shapiro) helps to highlight is how sporting practices structure individual psyches through micro-level normative regulation that conforms disparate behaviour towards a hegemonic standard: individual bodies are conditioned through social practices — as I suggested via Butler (see Jung, 2001: 454–456).

One such hegemonic standard that is especially relevant for our purposes relates to the production and naturalisation of a particular political constellation centred on the sovereign state as a primary unit of action, and a concomitant connection between identity and political community. As Levermore (2004: 18) note, ‘sport reporting represents the state’s population as homogenous suggesting that we share a common yet exclusive way of life, which is more important than other identities’.¹⁶ Here, the sporting stories we tell about self and other intersect with geopolitical and historical narratives to help constitute a particular and widely held world view. These dynamics can be connected to wider discourses involved in the constitution and reproduction of personal and national identity (e.g. Burke, 2008; Campbell, 1992; Duncombe, 2016). We can position bodies involved with the social practice of sports spectatorship within ‘us’ versus ‘them’ dynamics that map easily onto identity and difference, self and other, including at the level of international sports competitions.

One way to make this point plain is to extend Butler’s concern with the performative constitution of gendered bodies. Sport has been widely identified as a hetero-normative social practice where hyper-masculinity is performed and reproduced. Historically, sport has often been understood as a venue for instilling values of toughness and courage in

young men — values that would presumably enable them to defend their country should the need arise (Messner, 1992; Stempel, 2006). These same values are also venerated and emulated by spectators, reaching extremes in crowd violence, as well as implicit in admiration for certain bodies and attitudes, which provide ready role models for people in all walks of life. In that context, Jansen and Sabo (1994) make the compelling point (via an analysis of media reportage on the Persian Gulf War) that a pervasive metaphorical exchange between sport and war helped support the ideological hegemony of white male elites and their aggressive national security posture. Of course, we can point beyond specific policies to the way bodies and identities are shaped and disciplined in this same environment. On this account, ideology, norms, bodies, identities and policies come together in a powerful melange that is difficult to unpick. We can likewise point towards the way other bodies thought not to conform with these gender norms are situated, not least enemy others from foreign lands, caricatured as irrational, emasculated, sensuous or licentious, who may also be the object of violent confrontation (see Sjoberg, 2007: 93–95). Of course, this is just one admittedly significant area where the constitution of bodies is at play in this context. Butler shows how the production of body and group identity intersect in multifarious ways, not least around national identity, as well as how the bodily abject aligns with social fissures around class, ethnicity, gender, religion and manifold other differences designated foreign (Butler, 1999: 169–171; see also Wilcox, 2015: 84–86). For these and many other reasons, sports discourse is highly figurative with the structure and dynamics of contemporary warfare.

The sport–war spectacle after 9/11

Having briefly outlined the cultural-historical context of sports spectatorship, we are now in a position to grasp the power and significance of the spectacular sport–war intertext, including its bodily dimensions and their legitimising effects. I do this via an analysis of how sport and international conflict intersected in the wake of 9/11: as New York mourned and healed; as the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were launched; and then, a decade later, on the night Osama bin Laden was killed. What I offer here is not intended as a definitive account of this period or even the place of sport in it. My intention is only to foreground some standout intertextual moments where intense bodily dimensions played a distinct and affirming role.

Nussbaum's astute, albeit brief, reading of the 'U-S-A' chant provides a useful opening to drill down into the broad dynamics that I have been describing. Her experience at the first baseball game after 9/11 is interesting because it captures a range of sentiments in the post-9/11 baseball crowd — from solidarity and belonging through to belligerence and vitriol. This complexity is evident at two other hallmark post-9/11 moments where the 'U-S-A' chant irrupted spontaneously as a crowd chorus. Perhaps the most powerful 'U-S-A' chant took place when President Bush visited ground zero in New York City. Finding his feet after several days of unconvincing leadership, Bush famously climbed atop a mound of rubble, put his arm around a firefighter and delivered a stirring impromptu speech: 'I can hear you.... The rest of the world hears you! And the people — and the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon' (Walsh, 2013). According to O'Tauthail (2003: 863), '[o]verwhelming cheering and roaring

greeted these remarks. Guttural gorilla yelps and spontaneous renewed chants of “USA! USA!” echoed around Bush as he hoisted and waived a miniature American flag’. A second and no less gripping moment occurred when the New York Mets played the Atlanta Braves on 21 September at Shea Stadium in the first game of baseball in New York City after 9/11. The playing field had been used as a staging ground for emergency supplies in the days after the attacks and Mets players had actively participated in the relief effort (Lebreton, 2016; Polti, 2011; Rosenthal, 2016). Now they were returning to the playing field. A game filled with significance, coloured with grief, defiance and solidarity, culminated in what was, for many, an unforgettable moment:

The Braves took the lead in the top of the eighth. Mike Piazza, the Mets star catcher, came to the plate in the bottom of the inning, and on an 0–1 count, hit a towering home run to center field to give the Mets a 3–2 lead they never relinquished. The crowd responded with cheers, some tears, and then this: ‘USA! USA! USA!’ (Polti, 2011)

Both here and at ground zero, a spontaneous ‘U-S-A’ chant captured the moment, distilling powerful and mixed emotions: belonging and affinity, but also a posture towards the perpetrators of the heinous violence — perhaps anger, certainly defiance and resolve. Both here and at ground zero, a deep intertext was in action, which brought together national security, identity and sporting tradition in the articulation of 9/11. The body was inseparable from this intertextuality: welling up in heartfelt outpouring, artless and impromptu; ringing out with conviction from lung and larynx; resonating ~~together~~ in powerful chorus. Whatever the textual logic legitimised by the grafting of sport and national security crisis (the classic effect ascribed to intertextuality), it was all the more powerful, believable even, with the bodily experience braided through.

While these post-9/11 moments held complex sentiments in tension, it is also the case that the sport–war intertext had the potential to facilitate assertive nationalism and a Manichean world view. Take, for instance, the way the ‘U-S-A’ chant has historically been mobilised. The cultural origin of the ‘U-S-A’ chant is the ‘miracle on ice’ hockey match between the US and the Soviet Union at the 1980 New York Winter Olympics (Nussbaum, 2001). Played in the context of an arms race spiralling to new extremes and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan just two months earlier, like Barthes’s wrestling match pageantry, the geopolitical narrative of the contest required no direction. An underdog US team comprised mainly of amateurs faced a professional and previously undefeated adversary. Perhaps expressing the catharsis of a last-play victory against the odds, there was a palpable sense of national rejuvenation expressed in the news media and by many public figures (Budowsky, 2018). Since then, the ‘U-S-A’ chant has been a recurring feature at the intersection of popular nationalism and geopolitics: it appeared at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, an event heavy with Cold War undertones; it was co-opted by the Regan presidential campaign, expressing a muscular patriotism in contrast to the Soviet ‘evil empire’; it thereafter took root in popular culture, for instance, as the calling card of the World Wrestling Federation’s ‘Hacksaw’ Jim Duggan¹⁷; and it emerged as a feature of patriotic support for the First Gulf War, coming to the fore in reactionary responses to anti-war protests and at so-called ‘human flag’ rallies, where people would coordinate in red, white and blue clothing to form large-scale US flags (Fromson, 2011).

As shock and mourning gave way to a military response and presidential rhetoric centred on righteous vengeance, the spectacular sport warfare discourse was increasingly dominant. When President Bush appeared at the opening game of baseball's 'World Series' to throw the first pitch, just one month after the 9/11 attacks, 57,000 people responded with a patriotic fervour that reminded Karl Rove, the president's political advisor, of a 'Nazi rally' (Butterworth, 2005: 116). Increasingly, sporting events were shot through with geopolitics and military-nationalism. The media coverage of the 2002 Winter Olympics, held in Salt Lake City seamlessly integrated the emerging post-9/11 world view. During the TV coverage of the opening ceremony, for instance, each country that was allied to the US received positive comments noting the fact: the highest praise was reserved for the British team 'because of the tremendous support Tony Blair and the British had given the US after 9/11'; when the Afghan team should have appeared, its absence was attributed to 'the policies of the Taliban', while the Iranian contingent was located as 'a member of what President Bush has called the axis of evil ... [which he] believes threatens world peace and security' (Falcous and Silk, 2005: 62). Here, we see potent associations between a US identity and an implacable other, the 'us' versus 'them' of Bush's post-9/11 address to Congress, intersecting with a sporting event where identity and difference, victory and defeat, were already structured around nation-states, with deep politico-historical narratives contextualising their activities.

The significance of embodied experience in these circumstances should already be clear. However, in contrast to the post-9/11 ballpark moments, the bodily force evoked through the practice of spectatorship was much closer to the narrower sports partisanship of the regular season. Take, for instance, the reaction of NFL spectators as Operation Enduring Freedom swung into action:

Whether intended or not, the timing of the air strikes had a potent effect on fans. When the crowd of 64,000 waiting to watch the Philadelphia Eagles play the Arizona Cardinals at Veterans Stadium in Pennsylvania saw Bush's announcement of the strikes broadcasted on the big screen, they erupted in cheers. And the news wires carried reports of men watching football in bars and commenting on the retaliation: '[The Taliban] wanted to play the game, and now the score is tied,' one Rhode Island man said. 'It's good. We should [hit them] again.' (Stossel, 2001)

This spectator sport-war intertext only intensified in the lead-up to the Iraq War of 2003, most blatantly in the media presentation of the 'shock and awe' air campaign that initiated Operation Iraqi Freedom. The opening salvos of the Second Gulf War coincided with 'March madness', the US College Basketball playoffs, so that the spectacle of sport and war dominated television broadcasting:

On one channel you see in the foreground a well-known ex-basketball player provide the viewer with the 'keys to victory' as a producer skilfully mixes and fades statistical graphics superimposed on breathtaking slam-dunk replays, slowed down to effectively dramatize the moment.... Just a couple of channels over ... a highly decorated ex-Marine is busy providing the viewer with 'keys to victory' as the producer skilfully mixes and fades statistical graphics superimposed over breathtaking replays of smart bombs and stinger missile launches, slowed down to effectively dramatize the moment. (Brue, 2003)

Robert Lipsyte (2006), an accomplished sports writer, felt a palpable sense of *déjà vu*:

when a general draws battle lines on a glass map, I keep seeing [football commentator] John Madden scrawling those Xs and Os. The TV ‘warcasters’ clatter on about ‘momentum’ and ramping up to ‘win ugly’. I wonder whether I have overslept from the NFL season.

What emerges here is not just the palpable intersection of text and body and practice, but also the politically significant legitimization that often accompanies it.

A decade after 9/11, the ‘U-S-A’ chant echoed through the streets of the US capital. Crowds had gathered there and elsewhere around the country to celebrate the killing of Osama bin Laden, which was carried out through a covert raid into Pakistan by an elite team of US navy seals¹⁸ (Bump, 2015). According to the *New York Times*, ‘[t]he news touched off an extraordinary outpouring of emotion as crowds gathered outside the White House, in Times Square and at the ground zero site, waving American flags, cheering, shouting, laughing and chanting, “U.S.A., U.S.A.!”’ (Baker et al., 2011). The chant also erupted spontaneously at another baseball game — by chance, the New York Mets were playing as the news broke, although this time against the Philadelphia Phillies. Mets pitcher Chris Young captured the significance of the moment:

I came inside and heard the news. There are some things bigger than the game and our jobs. I was inside. You could hear the crowd chanting, ‘U-S-A.’ And I got chills hearing that. It was a pretty neat atmosphere and place to be to get that kind of news.... It’s certainly a historic night and a great victory for the United States and the war on terrorism. (Rubin, 2011)

Although by no means the end of the conflicts initiated in response to 9/11, the killing of Bin Laden had undeniable symbolic meaning. Along with exuberance, catharsis and ringing conviction, along with thousands of voices raised in chorus, was also the affirmation of a particular world view and geopolitical imagination — a War on Terror narrative and the logic of infinite justice.

Conclusion

This article set out to develop an account of intertextuality that takes seriously the bodily dimensions of popular culture and political discourse. Building on Kristeva’s engagement with the body and language, I have suggested a framework that binds together bodies, discourses and social practices. Here, an intertext refers not simply to other texts from the surrounding culture, but to the universe of meaning that those texts are implicated in. IR researchers have focused on the way intertextuality can support and legitimise the prevailing ideological conditions and the production of meaning in that context. In this respect, if the bodily register — drives, impulses, identities, affects, habits and so on — flow with and support this meaning-making process, then it is all the more legitimised for the imbrication. This article suggests a way for researchers interested in the intersection of popular culture and world politics to bring the body to the heart of their analysis — namely, by taking seriously the deep social practices that underscore every intertext. More broadly, understanding social practices as the crucible where body and discourse are fused suggests a route through the body–culture divide that has long been a subject of debate in IR theory.

I want to end the article by reflecting on the wider political stakes of the foregoing account. The point of intertextuality, for Kristeva at least, was not simply to explain how meaning is produced and legitimised. It was also a way to demonstrate its instability by emphasising the excess of meaning latent in any text, the immanent contradictions and silences, and the possibilities of alternative interpretations (see Aradau and Huysmans, 2014). With that in mind, we can associate Nussbaum's disquiet about the post- 9/11 'U-S-A' chant with Linda Åhäll's (2018b) insight that moments of affective dissonance mark sites of resistance and openings for critical engagement. Indeed, Nussbaum critiqued what she saw as malice and mob jingoism with little space for nuance, let alone a cosmopolitan ethic centred on empathy and compassion. Taking her negative affect as provocation, we might consider the aporias of meaning and alternative possibilities contained within the sport–war intertext. One way to do this is to think alongside Shapiro about what is too easily left out of the sport–war intertext when it is mobilised in the context of military-nationalism and a Manichean world view. He points to the political economy of international violence that often escapes an episodic 'contest' mindset by accentuating the global arms trade — but given the focus of this article, it seems appropriate to highlight the bodily experiences that can also escape this narrow frame. Both sport and war have a human cost that is not nearly as visible when attention is trained on the spectacle of clashing opponents. People are killed and injuries are carried for years and often lifetimes. Particularly pertinent for the current analysis is that the whole body is affected. There is growing evidence of endemic mental health issues affecting professional athletes, not least in their transition out of sport, when depression and suicidal tendencies are common. The emotional and psychological wounds of war are orders of magnitude greater, though no less obscured by an episodic mindset.¹⁹ The US Department of Veterans' Affairs estimates the 23% of veterans returning from the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (US DVA, 2015), while scores of veterans commit suicide every day (US DVA, 2018). The encounters of US soldiers with international conflict belie the figuration too easily promulgated through the sport–war intertext. Indeed, this bodily carnage could be understood as a palpable, uncontrollable and tragic point of resistance against the ideological conditions that normalise war and put their bodies in harm's way. Of course, this is only one, albeit significant, example of the complexity that often exceeds the narrowest manifestations of the sport–war intertext. Perhaps the simplest way to make this point is to note that terms like 'victory' and 'defeat' make little sense when the war goes on, beyond the textual boundaries established to contain it, in the bodies of those it impacts.

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Notes

1. For overviews, see Caso and Hamilton (2015), Hamilton and Shepherd (2016) and Grayson et al. (2009).
2. Hansen (2006: 57) points to a further category of ‘marginal political discourse’, where resistance and critique against dominant discourse might be located, particularly under authoritarian regimes.
3. In her Bosnian War case study, Hansen (2006: 21, 161) does reference the way gendered identities can threaten bodies, as well as the ‘body language’ of troop exercises.
4. Koschut (2017) provides a brief outline of what emotional intertextuality might look like, which extrapolates on existing approaches by focusing on emotional representations in text.
5. Kristeva’s use of semiotic (*le semiotique*) is not to be confused with the common usage (*la semiotique*), which refers to the science of signs (Doty, 2004: fn. 13; Oliver, 1997: xv).
6. Barthes provides another route into the body and discourse, but I have focused on Kristeva because of her treatment of bodily drives and embodiment.
7. Of course, the body also exists beyond discourse, as I show later via Butler.
8. While there is no room here to deal with Bakhtin more extensively, it is worth noting that *Rabelais and his World* (Bakhtin, 1968: 303–436) was explicitly concerned with the bodily aspects of folk culture expressed in the rites and festivities of the carnival, including games and contests.
9. Michael Shapiro (1989a: 80) draws on Bakhtin’s idea of centrifugal and centripetal forces in his account of the tension between local and centralising forces in the evolution of sporting practices. In doing so, he implies the relationship between discourse and social practice that I develop here.
10. Connolly (2005) highlights a ‘resonance machine’ that brings discursive and material elements together in powerful assemblages.
11. This supplements Hansen’s (2006, 2011, 2017) existing framework.
12. Hutchison and Bleiker (2014) highlight this necessity in relation to emotions research.
13. My intention is not to give a definitive account of the relationship between sport and IR, or to deny the many positives that can flow from sport. See, for instance, Toni Erskine’s (2008: 218–221) account of how football built common ground across no-man’s-land during the First World War.
14. I do not claim that ‘spectacular war’ is the best way of characterising current US war fighting. Rather, this references one important aspect of the post-Cold War decade leading into 9/11 and the opening phase of the War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq, which is the focus of the case study.
15. For critical engagement, see Dunne and Devetak (2017).
16. Indeed, Pierre De Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, portrayed the games as a natural arena for competition between nations-as-states (Levermore, 2004; Rowe, 2002).
17. With Barthes again in mind, it is worth noting that during the First Gulf War, Duggan and Hulk Hogan (another paragon of Americana) faced off against Sgt Slaughter (playing the part of a US Marine brainwashed by Iraqi subversives) to a stadium-wide chorus of ‘U-S-A’ (Fromson, 2011).
18. For the official response, see Jarvis and Holland (2014).
19. Berents and Keogh (2018) provide an insightful corollary in their analysis of the disembodiment at play in first-person shooter video games.

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