# 1NC

## 1

#### Interpretation—the affirmative must disclose their plan text and advocacy area 30 minutes prior to the round round,.

#### Violation They Don’t - Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message Description automatically generated

#### Standards -

#### 1 Limits – Unbroken standard and advantage areas are unpredictable – they can read any framework and advantage area so it’s impossible to know what to specify since my prep won’t apply or be specific enough and I might have to read an alternative framework, so the neg has to prep every single one of thousands of different standards and advantages to have a shot at engaging whereas the aff only has to prep one, creating a massive prep skew.

#### 2 Argument quality: standard text and advantage disclosure discourages cheap shot aff’s with fringe authors and bad solvency – you could read a hyperspecific advantage that I can’t cut solvency deficits to or a super descriptive aff that I need prep for like Polls. If the aff is defeated by 15 minutes of research, it should lose, otherwise bad affs win on purely surprise factor. Also impacts to evidence ethics, without any disclosure you could make up everything about the authors and evidence – evidence ethics outweighs b/c it calls into question everything else. If they would lie about their evidence, then anything else they said could be a lie as well and should be disregarded, so be suspect of all their args.

#### Voters -

#### 1. Fairness is a voter since the ballot asks who the better debater is and you can’t make that decision accurately if the round is unfair.

#### 2. Education is a voter, since A] it’s the only long term benefit we get out of debate, and B] it’s the reason schools fund debate.

#### 3. Drop the debater on new affs: A. Their lack of disclosure makes substance irreparable b/c our entire argument is that we did not have a basis to engage the aff to begin with. B. Drop the arg means they lose since they lose their entire advocacy and cannot have offense.

#### 4. Competing interps: A. Reasonability causes a race to the bottom where we read increasingly unfair practices that minimally fit the brightline- we should set the best norms. B. Collapses- you use offense-defense to determine reasonability being good which concedes the authority of competing interps- saying reasonability is reasonable is circular

#### 5. NO RVI A. They incentivize debaters to go all in in theory and bait it with abusive practices, killing substantive clash on other flows. B. They can run theory on me too if I’m unfair so 1) theory is reciprocal because we’re both able to check abuse and 2) also cures time skew because they can collapse in the 2ar to their shell. C. Illogical: being fair isn’t a reason you should win, it’s a prima-facie burden for both sides.

## 2

#### International Relations is the royal science of empire – the aff engineers “sustainable warfare” through a mutating geopolitics of violence.

Grove ‘19

[Jarius, PoliSci at the University of Hawai’i. 2019. “Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics in the Anthropocene.”] pat – ask me for the PDF!

Because I wanted this book to inspire curiosity beyond the boundaries of international relations (ir), I considered ignoring the field altogether, removing all mentions of ir or ir theory. However, upon closer reflection, I have decided to keep these references as I think they are relevant for those outside the discipline and for those who, like myself, often feel alienated within its disciplinary boundaries. In the former case, it is important to know that, unlike some more humble fields, ir has always held itself to be a kind of royal science. Scholarship in ir, particularly in the United States, is half research, and half biding time until you have the prince’s ear. The hallowed names in the mainstream of the field are still known because they somehow changed the behavior of their intended clients—those being states, militaries, and international organizations. Therefore, some attention to ir is necessary because it has an all-too-casual relationship with institutional power that directly impacts the lives of real people, and ir is all too often lethal theory. As an American discipline, the political economy of the field is impossible without Department of Defense money, and its semiotic economy would be equally dwarfed without contributory figures like Woodrow Wilson, Henry Kissinger, and Samuel Huntington. The ubiquity of Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” thesis and Kissinger’s particular brand of realpolitik are undeniable throughout the field, as well as the world. Each, in their own way, has saturated the watchwords and nomenclature of geopolitics from an American perspective so thoroughly that both political parties in the United States fight over who gets to claim the heritage of each. Although many other fields such as anthropology and even comparative literature have found themselves in the gravitational pull of geopolitics, international relations is meant to be scholarship as statecraft by other means. That is, ir was meant to improve the global order and ensure the place of its guarantor, the United States of America. Having spent the better part of a decade listening to national security analysts and diplomats from the United States, South Korea, Japan, Europe, China, Brazil, and Russia, as well as military strategists around the planet, I found their vocabulary and worldview strikingly homogeneous.

If this seems too general a claim, one should take a peek at John Mearsheimer’s essay “Benign Hegemony,” which defends the Americanness of the ir field. What is most telling in this essay is not a defense of the U.S. as a benign hegemonic power, which Mearsheimer has done at length elsewhere. Rather, it is his vigorous defense that as a field, ir theory has done well by the world in setting the intellectual agenda for global challenges, and for creating useful theoretical approaches to addressing those problems. For Mearsheimer, the proof that American scholarly hegemony has been benign is that there is nothing important that has been left out. A quick scan of the last ten or twenty International Studies Association conferences would suggest otherwise.

That issues like rape as a weapon of war, postcolonial violence, global racism, and climate change are not squarely in the main of ir demonstrates just how benign American scholarly hegemony is not. As one prominent anthropologist said to me at dinner after touring the isa conference in 2014, “it was surreal, like a tour through the Cold War. People were giving papers and arguing as if nothing had ever changed.” These same provincial scholars aspire and succeed at filling the advisory roles of each successive American presidency. One cannot help but see a connection between the history of the ir field, and the catastrophes of U.S. foreign policy during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. One could repeat the words of the anthropologist I mentioned to describe the 2016 presidential campaign debates over the future of U.S. foreign policy: it is as if “nothing had ever changed.” And yet these old white men still strut around the halls of America’s “best” institutions as if they saved us from the Cold War, even as the planet crumbles under the weight of their failed imperial dreams.

If international relations was meant to be the science of making the world something other than what it would be if we were all left to our own worst devices, then it has failed monumentally. The United States is once again in fierce nuclear competition with Russia. We are no closer to any significant action on climate change. We have not met any of the Millennium Development Goals determined by the United Nations on eradicating poverty. War and security are the most significant financial, creative, social, cultural, technological, and political investments of almost every nation-state on Earth. The general intellect is a martial intellect.

Despite all this failure, pessimism does not exist in international relations, at least not on paper. The seething doom of our current predicament thrives at the conference bar and in hushed office conversations but not in our research. In public, the darkness disavowed possesses and inflames the petty cynicisms and hatreds that are often turned outward at tired and predictable scapegoats.

After the fury of three decades of critique, most ir scholars still camp out either on the hill of liberal internationalism or in the dark woods of political realism. Neither offers much that is new by way of answers or even explanations, and each dominant school has failed to account for our current apocalyptic condition. One is left wondering what it is exactly that they think they do. Despite the seeming opposition between the two, one idealistic about the future of international order (liberals) and the other self-satisfied with the tragedy of cycles of war and dominance (realists), both positions are optimists of the positivist variety.

For both warring parties, ir optimism is expressed through a romantic empiricism. For all those who toil away looking for the next theory of international politics, order is out there somewhere, and dutifully recording reality will find it—or at least bring us closer to its discovery. For liberal internationalism, this will bring the long-heralded maturity of Immanuel Kant’s perpetual peace. For second-order sociopaths known as offensive realists, crumbs of “useful strategic insight” and the endless details that amplify their epistemophilia for force projection and violence capability represent a potential “advantage,” that is, the possibility to move one step forward on the global political board game of snakes and ladders. Still, the cynicism of ir always creeps back in because the world never quite lives up to the empirical findings it is commanded to obey. Disappointment here is not without reason, but we cynically continue to make the same policy recommendations, catastrophe after catastrophe.

I have an idea about where ir’s recent malaise comes from. I think it is a moment, just before the awareness of the Anthropocene, after the Cold War and before September 11, when the end of everything was only a hypothetical problem for those of a certain coddled and privileged modern form of life. The catastrophe of the human predicament was that there was no catastrophe, no reason, no generation-defining challenge or war. Now the fate of this form of life is actually imperiled, and it is too much to bear. The weird denial of sexism, racism, climate change, the sixth extinction, and loose nukes, all by a field of scholars tasked with studying geopolitics, is more than irrationalism or ignorance. This animosity toward reality is a deep and corrosive nihilism, a denial of the world. Thus ir as a strategic field is demonstrative of a civilization with nothing left to do, nothing left to destroy. All that is left is to make meaning out of being incapable of undoing the world that Euro-American geopolitics created. Emo geopolitics is not pretty, but it is real. The letdown, the failure, the apocalypse-that-was-not finally arrived, and we are too late.

Still, the United States of America continues to follow the advice of “the best and the brightest,” testing the imperial waters, not quite ready to commit out loud to empire but completely unwilling to abandon it. Stuck in between, contemporary geopolitics—as curated by the United States—is in a permanent beta phase. Neuro-torture, algorithmic warfare, drone strikes, and cybernetic nation-building are not means or ends but rather are tests. Can a polis be engineered? Can the human operating system be reformatted? Can violence be modulated until legally invisible while all the more lethal? Each incursion, each new actor or actant, and new terrains from brains to transatlantic cables—all find themselves part of a grand experiment to see if a benign or at least sustainable empire is possible. There is no seeming regard for the fact that each experiment directly competes with Thomas Jefferson’s democratic experiment. One wonders if freedom can even exist anywhere other than temporarily on the fringe of some neglected order. Is this some metaphysical condition of freedom, or is the world so supersaturated with martial orders that the ragged edges between imperial orders are all that we have left? It feels like freedom’s remains persist only in the ruins of everything else. No space is left that can be truly indifferent to the law, security, or economy. Such is the new life of a human in debt. The social contract has been refinanced as what is owed and nothing more: politics without equity. Inequity without equality.

What about the impending collapse of the post–World War II order, the self-destruction of the United States, the rise of China and a new world order? If humanity lasts long enough for China to put its stamp on the human apocalypse, I will write a new introduction. Until then, we live in the death rattle of Pax Americana. While I think the totality of this claim is true, I do not want to rule out that many of us throughout the world still make lives otherwise. Many of us even thrive in spite of it all. And yet, no form of life can be made that escapes the fact that everything can come to a sudden and arbitrary end thanks to the whim of an American drone operator, nuclear catastrophe, or macroeconomic manipulation like sanctions. There are other ways to die and other organized forms of killing outside the control of the United States; however, no other single apparatus can make everyone or anyone die irrespective of citizenship or geographic location. For me, this is the most inescapable philosophical provocation of our moment in time.

The haphazard and seemingly limitless nature of U.S. violence means that even the core principles of the great political realist concepts like order and national interest are being displaced by subterranean violence entrepreneurs that populate transversal battlefields, security corridors, and border zones. Mercenaries, drug lords, chief executive officers, presidents, and sports commissioners are more alike than ever. Doomsayers like Paul Virilio, Lewis Mumford, and Martin Heidegger foretold a kind of terminal and self-annihilating velocity for geopolitics’ technological saturation, but even their lack of imagination appears optimistic. American geopolitics does not know totality or finality; it bleeds, mutates, and reforms. Furthermore, the peril of biopolitics seems now almost romantic. To make life live? Perchance to dream. The care and concern for life’s productivity is increasingly subsumed by plasticity—forming and reforming without regard to the telos of productivity, division, or normative order.

There are, of course, still orders in our geoplastic age, but they are almost unrecognizable as such. When so many citizens and states are directly invested in sabotaging publicly stated strategic ends, then concepts like national interest seem equally quaint. We are witnessing creative and horrifying experiments in the affirmative production of dying, which also deprive those targeted and in some cases whole populations from the relief of death. To follow Rucker, I want to try to see the world for what it is. We can only say that tragedy is no longer a genre of geopolitics. Tragedy redeems. The occluded character of contemporary geopolitics shoehorned into experience produces the feeling that there is no relief, no reason, no victory, no defeats, and no exit within the confines of national security’s constricted world. This is not tragedy: it is horror. We live in an age of horror that, like the victims of gore movies who never quite die so that they can be tortured more, furthers our practice of collective violence and goes on for decades as a kind of sustainable warfare.

#### **Their Focus on medical innovations generates a visceral attachment to life – it produces a need to eliminate those dubbed “subhuman” through state-sanctioned eugenics** via the political – turns case

Grove 19 (Jairus Victor Grove; 2019; The Duke University Press Books; *“Savage Ecology: War and* Geopolitics at the End of the World”; accessed 7/24/21; ask me for the pdf; Jairus Victor Grove is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Hawai‘i Research Center for Future Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa.; pages 255-258) HB

Foregrounding the fear of robots is a long history of human mutation, having been the focus of the various iterations of the eugenics movement. Before that, it faced the wrath of superstition. As such, questions of political rights have never been divorced from biological or more specifically species considerations; there exists, rather, a biopolitics of citizenship and in regard to not just the polis but also the species.15 Whereas classical politics could speak of the organization and governance of subjects, the advent of a theory of biological evolution that included humans introduced the possibility of governing the production of subjects, not just in a legal or discursive sense— citizenship, caste, class—but in the “fitness” or biological character of its subjects. Race as a biological concept extends politics from the demographic questions of reproduction and health—as has been reconstructed in Michel Foucault’s Security, Territory, Population—to the intrinsic character of the babies born. The notion of the survival of the fittest lent the epistemic supremacy of science or objectivity to earlier moralized discussions of worker productivity or even the spiritual origins of industriousness and laziness. Nascent theories of racial superiority and inferiority came under the purview of governmentality in the form of Malthusian public health initiatives: birth control for the poor; sterilization of and experimentation on “incompetents” and racial minorities, in particular Native Americans—practices that did not end until the 1970s.16 A brief explanation of recent legal and political responses is worth noting. In 1927 the U.S. Supreme Court decided in Buck v. Bell that “for the protection and health of the state,” forced sterilization of imbeciles and other infirmed or abnormal people was not a violation of fundamental constitutional rights. The official position of the courts has not changed. In 1981 the courts decided in Poe v. Lynchburg Training School and Hospital that the eight thousand women forcibly sterilized in the state of Virginia had not had their constitutional rights violated. In the last year, an email alert was sent to attorneys who serve ad litem for foster children to publicize that the Environmental Protection Agency (epa) had adopted guidelines for testing known environmental toxins and carcinogens on unwanted or unknowing children. According to 70 fr 53857, “the epa proposes an extraordinary procedure applicable if scientifically sound but ethically deficient human research is found to be crucial to epa’s fulfilling its mission to protect public health. This procedure would also apply if a scientifically sound study covered by proposed § 26.221 or § 26.421— i.e., an intentional dosing study involving pregnant women or children as subjects—were found to be crucial to the protection of public health.”17 The explanation and scope of this decision was focused on children who “cannot be reasonably consulted,” such as those who are mentally handicapped or orphaned newborns: these groups may be tested on without informed consent. It also stated that parental consent forms were not necessary for testing on children who have been neglected or abused. As was the case in the original case of Buck v. Bell, being unwanted or otherwise downtrodden was made synonymous with being genetically deficient. To be included in the political community of constitutional rights, one has to be—by this logic—capable of demonstrating an “understanding” of those rights and one must be wanted by that community. As the epa’s proposed guidelines demonstrate, the century-long effort to eradicate human variation has not in any way eliminated unwanted or “subhuman” individuals. Now birth “defects” tend to mark class and national origin. Despite the best efforts of modern science—or because of the best efforts of modern science—public fear of mutation and the specter of genetically engineered beings and artificial intelligence has joined the ranks of the abject and unwanted. There is a recurrent hostility toward forms of life that do not narrowly fit the definition of humanity—a kind of somatic fundamentalism that insists that the genetics, phenotype, and manner of expression all conform to a norm of what it is to be human.18 As Georges Canguilhem argues, norms require a certain abnormality or pathology in order to take on meaning.19 But the abnormal is not merely an index for the normal; the abnormal becomes a moralizing category for measuring and finally determining what is human. In the case of mutation or variation—of either natural or artificial origins—deviating from the human image is what inspires revulsion. Robots and androids create the same feeling but through an inverse movement: they intrude upon the species by transgressing into the proprietary capabilities of consciousness, language, and other monopolies claimed by the human spe-cies. Japanese roboticist Masahiro Mori identified the phenomenon and proposed a hypothesis called the “Uncanny Valley.”20 The theory is that humans are fascinated by, even attracted to, robots as they gain human qualities— eyes, ears, and an identifiable face. Then, once robots become visibly or unmistakably humanlike, the fascination and attraction turns to disgust. The human participant in the experiment becomes agitated and uncomfortable. In recent experiments, the human respondents refuse to allow the robot to stand or move behind them.21 “Movement is a sign of life” and as such seems “wrong” for a machine.22 Although history is rife with the exploitation of other races (colonialism), nonhuman animal species (mechanization of animal husbandry and slaughter and animal experimentation), or subhumans (eugenic policies toward abnormal human development, including the poor and the sick), artificial life is a newly emerging horizon. Even if not “conscious,” the existence and increasing importance of “intelligent” machines confront us with the horror of the automaton while the genetically modified human presents us with something also “not quite right.” The possibility of artificial life in all its forms seems to provoke a response somewhere between atypical human bodies and inanimate objects. The possibility of artificial life treads in both the forbidden zone of challenging human superiority (in this case because it may exceed it, whereas mutations malign it) and the more traditional uncanny provocation of living objects. Therefore, life that does not resemble the norm of human life thus far, whether artificially created or naturally variant, will be met with the same violence and ignorance that those differently abled have faced from eugenicists unless the narrow definitions of life and the fear and ressentiment that inspire those definitions can be altered. This, I argue, requires what Connolly names cultivation. Connolly sees the “visceral attachment to life” as a resource for deep pluralism, one that hopes to transform the fear and loathing of variation into the “preliminary soil from which commitment to more generous identifications, responsibilities, and connections might be cultivated.”23 But I will add to this point that the “Uncanny Valley” not only exists for all those beings that stray from the normative boundaries of the species—whether biologically or synthetically divergent—but also represents a formidable obstacle to the cultivation of connections and generous identifications. This logic holds, in particular, if one’s visceral attachment to life is an attachment to a “human” life. Connolly’s immanent naturalism actively resists the temptation to circumscribe generosity to human subjects. Throughout Neuropolitics, Connolly insists that gratitude and generosity find their inspiration in an “attachment to the earth and care for a protean diversity of being.”24 To read this statement alongside early works such as Identity/Difference or The Ethos of Pluralization, one may wrongly assume that the “protean diversity of being” refers to a human being. However, what is clear in Connolly’s contestation of the nature/culture opposition is that an “attachment to the earth” complicates what Connolly means by being, as examples of communicative bacteria and participatory chimpanzees and crocodiles demonstrate.25 From this standpoint, the danger of falling into an anthropological limit is apparent. Reading Connolly’s deep pluralism only in the human terrain of traditional democratic theory obscures many of the sources of the gratitude and “earthiness” that inspire the necessary ethos for a deep pluralism.

#### Thus the Role of the Judge is to adopt martial empiricism.

Bousquet et al ‘20

[Antoine Bousquet, University of London, Jairus Grove, University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, and Nisha Shah University of Ottawa. 2020. “Becoming war: Towards a martial empiricism,” <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0967010619895660>] pat

Haunting the formations and deformations of global life, war confronts us as an abyss in the face of which cherished interpretative frameworks perilously buckle and warp. Indeed, Tarak Barkawi and Shane Brighton (2011: 129) accurately identify a ‘conceptual black hole surrounding the notion of war’ that has insistently gnawed at the study of the phenomenon. Locating the source of this lacuna in the absence of an ‘ontology of war’, they propose to ground one in ‘fighting’ (Barkawi and Brighton, 2011: 136). Although we concur on the diagnosis, we take issue with the suggested remedy. War does not obey any neat philosophical division between epistemology and ontology. For us, the resolute elusiveness of any definitive understanding of war is inherent in that very object. Every attempt to conceptually shackle war is undone by the creative advance of its new modes, residences and intensities. This speaks against the value of ontology per se less than it calls for a strange, paradoxical and provisional ontology that is consonant with the confounding mutability of war. Such an ontology, suspended between infinity and totality, being and nothingness, the sheer fecundity and utter catastrophe of war, may not be too uncanny for its object. In fairness, Barkawi and Brighton (2011: 133) gesture towards this in acknowledging ‘war’s recalcitrance as an object of knowledge’ and allowing for war to unmake any truth. Yet they seem unwilling to embrace the full force of their own insight, which Marc von Boemcken (2016: 239) ultimately declares: ‘even the statement that “war is fighting” may well be eventually undone by war. In a very fundamental manner, war escapes human intelligibility.’

This special issue on ‘Becoming War’ grapples with war as obdurate mystery. In its recurring persistence yet constant reinvention, its paradoxical ordering of life for the generation of death, or its stubborn affront to the better world we all purport to want, war never ceases to perplex us. Our world is one shot through by war, manifest in the nation-states we inhabit, the ecologies of technics that bind us to one another, and the very thoughts ricocheting through our communities of sense. And yet we still do not know war.

Rather than endeavour yet again to ‘say something fundamental about what war is’ (Barkawi and Brighton, 2011: 134, emphasis in original), we choose to explore how war becomes. This is not to say that we deny any durability or regularities in the phenomenon of war over time. Simply that, as Alfred Whitehead (1978: 35) puts it, ‘there is a becoming of continuity, but no continuity of becoming’. Accordingly, we seek to trace the lines of becoming that congeal into what comes to count as war, even as it continually frays at the edges and insolently defies habituated frames of reference. We do not, therefore, offer a theory of continuity, a formula for what all lines of becoming war might have in common, but instead sketch a style of investigation that encompasses both the enduring cohesion and the radical dispersion of war. We call this endeavour ‘martial empiricism’ to renounce attempts to devise a definitive theory of war. Instead, we favour an open-ended conceptual arsenal for following the trail of war wherever it leads us, as opposed to camping in the places where we already expect to find it.

Although we do not aim to circumscribe the remit of its investigations, martial empiricism is nonetheless inherently situational, spurred by the impulse to grasp the present martial condition we inhabit in all its calamity and promise. We would be far from the first to point out the growing inadequacy of the conceptual frameworks of war inherited from the Westphalian historical interval. Yet we still collectively flounder in the face of a combined and uneven landscape of armed conflict populated by metastasizing war machines encompassing overseas contingency operations, fullspectrum hybrid theatres, ethno-supremacist militias, crowd-sourced paramilitaries, Incel shooters and narco-state assassins. The game is definitely up when a task force led by the former head of United States Central Command can write that ‘basic categories such as “battlefield,” “combatant” and “hostilities” no longer have clear or stable meaning’ (Abizaid and Brooks, 2014: 35). Confronted with this reality and the persistent bewilderment it induces, we contend that a certain epistemic humility is in order. Rather than professing to know where war begins and ends, martial empiricism starts in the middle, with only the barest tentative intuitions necessary to explore the logistics, operations and embodiments that engender armed conflict as an unremitting condition of global life.

#### Voting negative adopts failed IR for a healthy dose of pessimism – at the end of the world, all we can do is hope to be buried alive together.

Grove ‘19

[Jarius, PoliSci at the University of Hawai’i. 2019. “Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics in the Anthropocene.”] pat – ask me for the PDF!

Failed ir affirms the power of this kind of negative thinking as an alternative to the endless rehearsing of moralizing insights and strategic foresight. The negative is not “against” or reacting to something. Rather, it is the affirmation of a freedom beyond the limits of life and death. That is, it is making a life by continuing to think about the world, even if that thinking is not recuperative, and even if nothing we think can save us. In the face of it all, one celebrates useless thinking, useless scholarship, and useless forms of life at the very moment we are told to throw them all under the bus in the name of survival at all costs. This is a logic referred to lately as hope and it is as cruel as it is anxiety inducing. Hope is a form of extortion. We are told that it is our obligation to bear the weight of making things better while being chided that the failure of our efforts is the result of not believing in the possibility of real change. In such an environment, pessimism is often treated as a form of treason, as if only neoliberals and moral degenerates give up—or so goes the op-ed’s insisting upon the renewed possibility of redemption.

In response to these exhortations, pessimism offers a historical atheism, both methodologically and morally. The universe does not bend toward justice. Sometimes the universe bends toward the indifference of gravity wells and black holes. Affirming negativity, inspired by Achille Mbembe, is grounds for freedom, even if that freedom or relief is only fleeting and always insecure. I am not arrogant enough to think a book can attain freedom of this sort, but this book is inspired by refusals of critique as redemption in favor of useless critique and critique for its own sake.

That the pursuit of knowledge without immediate application is so thoroughly useless, even profane, is a diagnosis of our current moment. The neoliberal assault on the university is evidence of this condition, as is the current pitch of American politics. Our indifference as intellectuals to maximizing value has not gone unnoticed. We are still dangerous, worthy of vilification, of attack, sabotage, and derision because we fail so decadently. We are parasites according to Scott Walker, Donald Trump, and the rest. So be it. We are and shall remain irascible irritants to a worldwide assault on thinking that is well underway and facing few obstacles in other jurisdictions.

What would failed scholarship do? Learn to die, learn to live, learn to listen, learn to be together, and learn to be generous. These virtues are useless in that they do not prevent or manage things. They do not translate into learning objectives or metrics. Virtues of this order are selfsame, nontransferable experiences. They are meaningful but not useful. These are luxurious virtues. Like grieving or joy, they are ends unto themselves. But how will these ideas seek extramural grants, contribute to an outcomes-based education system, or become a policy recommendation? They will not, and that is part of their virtue.

Even if there is no straight line to where we are and where we ought to be, I think we should get over the idea that somehow the U.S. project of liberal empire is conflicted, or “more right than it is wrong,” or pragmatically preferable to the alternatives. I hope this book can contribute to the urgent necessity to get out of the way by reveling in the catastrophic failure that should inspire humility but instead seems to embolden too many to seek global control yet again. Demolition may be an affirmative act if it means insurgents and others can be better heard. And yet this may fail too. If we can accomplish nothing at all, we can at least, as Ta-Nehisi Coates and other pessimists have said, refuse to suborn the lie of America any longer. Telling the truth, even if it cannot change the outcome of history, is a certain kind of solace. In Coates’s words, there is a kind of rapture “when you can no longer be lied to, when you have rejected the dream.” Saying the truth out loud brings with it the relief that we are not crazy. Things really are as bad as we think.

If there are those of us who want to break from this one-hundred-year-old race to be the next Henry Kissinger, then why do we continue to seek respect in the form of recognizable standards of excellence? I am not sure where the answer finally lies, but I do know that professionalization will not save us. To appear as normal and recognizably rigorous will not be enough to stave off the neoliberal drive to monetize scholarship, or to demand of us strategically useful insights. The least we can do in the face of such a battle is to find comfort in meaningful ideas and the friendships they build rather than try to perform for those we know are the problem. Some will ask, who is this “we” or is that “they”—where is your evidence? More will know exactly what I am talking about.

The virtues I seek are oriented toward an academy of refuge, a place we can still live, no matter how dire the conditions of the university and the classroom. It is not the think tank, boardroom, or command center. We are, those of us who wish to be included, the last of the philosophers, the last of the lovers of knowledge, the deviants who should revel in what Harney and Moten have called the undercommons.

In one of his final lectures, Bataille speaks of the remnants of a different human species, something not quite so doomed, something that wasted its newly discovered consciousness and tool-being on the art that still marks the walls of prehistoric caves. This lingering minor or vestigial heritage is philosophy’s beginning. Philosophy survives war, atrocity, famine, and crusades. Thinking matters in a very unusual way. Thinking is not power or emancipation. Thinking matters for a sense of belonging to the world, and for believing in the fecundity of the world despite evidence to the contrary.

How do you get all this from pessimism, from failure? Because willing failure is a temptation, a lure to think otherwise, to think dangerous thoughts. Pessimism is a threat to indifferentism and nihilism in the sense of the phenomenon of Donald Trump. Pessimism is a provocation and an enemy of skepticism, particularly of the metaphysical variety. It is not redemption from these afflictions, but in pessimism there is solace in the real. To put it another way, to study the world as it is means to care for it.

The exhortation that our care or interest should be contingent on how useful the world is and how much of it conforms to our designs is as much opposed to care as it is to empiricism. We can study airports, poetry, endurance races, borders, bombs, plastic, and warfare, and find them all in the world. To consider the depth of their existence can be an invitation to the world rather than a prelude to another policy report. One cannot make a successful political career out of such pursuits, but you might be able to make a life out of it, a life worth repeating even if nothing else happens.

At the end of Jack Halberstam’s The Queer Art of Failure, we are presented with the Fantastic Mr. Fox’s toast as an exemple of something meaningful in these dark times of ours.

They say all foxes are slightly allergic to linoleum, but it’s cool to the paw—try it. They say my tail needs to be dry cleaned twice a month, but now it’s fully detachable—see? They say our tree may never grow back, but one day, something will. Yes, these crackles are made of synthetic goose and these giblets come from artificial squab and even these apples look fake—but at least they’ve got stars on them. I guess my point is, we’ll eat tonight, and we’ll eat together. And even in this not particularly flattering light, you are without a doubt the five and a half most wonderful wild animals I’ve ever met in my life. So let’s raise our boxes—to our survival.

Halberstam says of this queer moment:

Not quite a credo, something short of a toast, a little less than a speech, but Mr. Fox gives here one of the best and most moving—both emotionally and in stop-motion terms—addresses in the history of cinema. Unlike Coraline, where survival is predicated upon a rejection of the theatrical, the queer, and the improvised, and like Where the Wild Things Are, where the disappointment of deliverance must be leavened with the pragmatism of possibility, Fantastic Mr. Fox is a queerly animated classic in that it teaches us, as Finding Nemo, Chicken Run, and so many other revolting animations before it, to believe in detachable tails, fake apples, eating together, adapting to the lighting, risk, sissy sons, and the sheer importance of survival for all those wild souls that the farmers, the teachers, the preachers, and the politicians would like to bury alive.

Although not as much fun as Halberstam’s monument to low theory, Savage Ecology is for all the other wild animals out there studying global politics. May we be buried alive together.

## Case

#### Utilitarian calculus doesn’t account for the geopolitical structure of aggregate conceptions of the good – that makes it incapable of grappling with the causes of apocalypse.

Grove ‘19

[Jarius, PoliSci at the University of Hawai’i. 2019. “Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics in the Anthropocene.”] pat – ask me for the PDF!

Rather than see these two career trajectories as opposed, I think Crutzen’s thinking displays a continuous concern for the Northern Hemisphere and a particular cartography, rather than a geography, of human survival. Crutzen, as well as the concept of the Anthropocene itself, cannot escape preceding geopolitical conceptions of the Earth. Crutzen and others who rush so quickly to the necessity to transition efforts from climate abatement to climate modification are unsurprisingly not moved by claims that artificial cooling will likely cause droughts and famines in the tropics and subtropical zones of the global south; nor are they moved by how such plans may accelerate ocean acidification. The utilitarian risk calculus that favors the greatest good for the greatest number has no geographical or historical sensibility of how unequally aggregate conceptions of the good are distributed around the planet.

Global thinking, even in its scientific and seemingly universalist claims to an atmosphere that “we” all share, belies the geopolitics that enlivens scientific concern, as well as the global public policy agenda of geoengineering that seeks to act on behalf of it. Saving humanity as an aggregate, whether from nuclear war, Styrofoam, or climate turbulence, has never meant an egalitarian distribution of survivors and sacrifices. Instead, our new cosmopolitanism—the global environment—follows almost exactly the drawn lines, that is, the cartography or racialized and selective solidarities and zones of indifference that characterize economic development, the selective application of combat, and, before that, the zones of settlement and colonization. More than a result of contemporary white supremacy or lingering white privilege, the territorialization of who lives and who dies, who matters and who must be left behind for the sake of humanity, represents a five-hundred-year geopolitical tradition of conquest, colonization, extraction, and the martial forms of life that made them all possible through war and through more subtle and languid forms of organized killing.

I am not suggesting that Crutzen and others are part of a vast conspiracy; rather, I want to outline how climate change, species loss, slavery, the elimination of native peoples, and the globalization of extractive capitalism are all part of the same global ordering. That is, all of these crises are geopolitical. The particular geopolitical arrangement of what others have called the longue durée, and what I am calling the Eurocene, is geologically significant but is not universally part of “human activity” despite the false syllogism at the heart of popular ecological thinking that a global threat to humanity must be shared in cause and crisis by all of humanity.

Departing from Sloterdijk, I am hesitant to so easily locate modernity or explication as the root or cause of the global catastrophe. No single strategy, war, act of colonization, technological breakthrough, or worldview fully explains the apocalypse before us. However, there is something like what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari call a refrain that holds the vast assemblage together, a geopolitical melody hummed along with the global expansion of a form of life characterized by homogenization rather than diversification. Accordingly, if we are to make some sense of such a vast world that is, even for Crutzen and Birks, “quite complex and difficult to model,” I think we must consider the particular refrain of geopolitics that is capable of, by scientific as well as more humbly embodied standards, destroying worlds along with the world. To eschew geopolitics simply because, as a refrain, it is too big, too grand, or too universal would ignore the conditions of possibility for nuclear weapons, power politics, and carbon-based globalization, and would greatly impoverish the explanatory capability of even the best climate models. So maybe it is not so strange that Crutzen and others’ attention to the nuclear threat of great powers has all but disappeared despite the fact that Russia and the United States still possess thousands of nuclear weapons, and as of late have been all too vocal about using them. Instead, the Anthropocene, as envisioned by Crutzen as a universal concern, requires with it a depoliticization of the causes of that concern.