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#### The COVID epidemic has exposed massive flaws in biosecurity, lack of public health compliance, anti-vaxxers, and PPE shortages have shown unique vulnerabilities – the US is specifically exposed

Lyon 21 (Regan Lyon; 7/1/21; Military Medicine, Volume 186, Issue7-8, July-August 2021, Pages 193-196; *“The COVID-19 Response Has Uncovered and Increased Our Vulnerability to Biological Warfare”*; accessed 8/13/21; <https://academic.oup.com/milmed/article/186/7-8/193/6135020>; Department of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School) HB \*We do not endorse the ableist language of the card\*

INTRODUCTION Biological warfare has been an unlikely, but serious, concern for military operations and national security. The 2018 National Biodefense Strategy (NBS) articulated a collaborative plan to prevent, detect, and respond to biological threats to the USA.1 The NBS highlights recent, isolated outbreaks of Systemic Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Ebola, and Zika viruses as warnings to nation states and justification for enhanced biological threat responses. Although these events are not considered deliberate threats, clandestine bioweapon programs and terrorist groups seeking such programs are known to exist and capitalize on such natural outbreaks.1 The NBS’s emphasis on prevention and response drives the requirement to enhance biological weapon deterrence and defense strategies to avert the employment of biological weapons on U.S. civilians or military personnel.1 The public health crisis that ensued with SARS-associated coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) has highlighted our nation’s bioweapon vulnerabilities on the international stage and has the potential for disastrous effects on national security. Previous questions regarding how the USA would respond to a large biological outbreak (or biological weapon) have now been answered for potential adversaries across the world. The ambiguity of both our capabilities and weaknesses, which provided deterrence to adversarial employment of biological weapons before the pandemic, no longer exists. This article will provide an overview on biological weapons and the concepts of deterrence and defense in the context of bioterrorism. Then, it will analyze how the national personal protective equipment (PPE) shortage, public resistance to public health measures, the anti-vaccination movement, and USNS (United States Navy Ship) Comfort deployment to New York City have increased our vulnerability to bioterror attack by impacting our deterrence and defense measures. Finally, it will offer recommendations to restore our bioterrorism security after the detrimental effects from the events unfolding in the USA. BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS REGULATIONS, DETERRENCE, AND DEFENSE Even though biological warfare is considered a “weapon of mass destruction” and is prohibited by a treaty drafted by the 1972 United Nations Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), not all adversaries adhere to these standards. Terrorist groups and covert operations have utilized biological weapons for small operations because the actors, by nature, are either non-eligible to ratify the treaty or would not do so if they could. Although there have been no intentional large-scale attacks, especially by adversarial nation states, this is not guaranteed to be the case in the future.2 The BWC does not prohibit ratified nations from having pathogens or toxins for peaceful purposes, such as the development of vaccines. After the natural outbreak of smallpox and its subsequent eradication accomplished by the World Health Organization in 1980, less virulent poxviruses have continued to be used in a variety of laboratories for research and development of vaccines for a variety of diseases.3 The original, more deadly strain of smallpox has been retained at two facilities in Russia and Atlanta.4 Because smallpox’s virology makes it an ideal biological weapon, the samples in Atlanta and Russia offer defense through researching countermeasures should an attack occur and simultaneously provide a repository from which a biological weapon can be acquired. “Deterrence” and “defense” are two concepts which are typically described in terms of nuclear warfare, but they can also be applied to national security from a biological attack.5 Deterrence is the ability to prevent an adversary from taking some action during peacetime.5 For biological warfare deterrence, vaccines and preventative medicine measures prevent susceptibility to a microbe. For a largely vaccinated and/or health-conscious population, the costs of production, storage, and dissemination of a bioweapon greatly outweighs the rare chance of the target contracting the disease. New Zealand’s robust public health measures, citizen compliance, and continued efforts to sustain a caseload under 20 since April is a strong deterrent for biological attack.6 Defense mechanisms decrease the effectiveness of the attack, putting a high cost-to-benefit burden on the adversary.5 A defense measure for bioterrorism would be an adequate medical treatment response to casualties of the bioweapon, decreasing mortality and the overall effectiveness of the weapon. COVID-19 PANDEMIC ANALYSIS The novel SARS-CoV-2 has several characteristics of an ideal biological weapon, including high transmission rate, long incubation period, airborne transmission, and significant morbidity/mortality.7 In fact, early in the pandemic, suspicion was cast that the virus was being developed as a biological weapon by a laboratory in Wuhan, China.8 Although these allegations have been deemed conspiracy theories as a result of misinformation operations, the resulting pandemic and the panicked public share similarities to a bioterror attack. The events occurring within the USA during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic create a global narrative on how we respond to a biological crisis. The 2018 NBS emphasized the continued threat of biological weapons to national security and identified the need to deter and defend against bioterrorism acts.1 This section will analyze events in the USA during the pandemic, how they bolstered or negated our current bioterrorism deterrence or defense strategies, and offer areas for improvement to restore our bioterror security. Personal Protective Equipment Shortage The 2018 NBS mandates having a robust mobilization of PPE for frontline healthcare workers and an adequate communication plan on preventative health measures for the general public in the event of an attack.1 The ability to provide sufficient quantities of PPE for medical personnel is a vital defense tactic as it increases the efficiency of the healthcare system to treat casualties in response to a biological outbreak. Having the ability to mobilize these resources to hospitals strengthens bioterror deterrence by demonstrating to a potential adversary that a bioterror attack would have a limited effect on a population given the healthcare preparedness. As conflicting information was published across multiple media platforms from January to March, panic spread that the virus was more dangerous than originally believed. Citizens flooded stores in town and online, buying “essential items” in preparation for a lockdown. Items such as masks, gloves, and sanitizers were out of stock everywhere, including healthcare supply chains. More importantly, citizens heard N95 masks could prevent contracting the virus, suddenly increasing N95 demand.9 Demand exceeded supply quickly, and healthcare workers began complaining of the nation-wide shortage of appropriate PPE required to care for infected patients.10 The inability to acquire necessary PPE supplies due to crippled supply chains and general public hoarding caused a ripple effect within the healthcare system. As a result, hospitals began to institute resource conservation measures, attempting to extend the life of supplies intended for one-time use. These PPE conservation measures, however, were interpreted by some healthcare workers as putting their lives in jeopardy and instigated lobbying and campaigning for government involvement. News reports flourished of disgruntled healthcare workers who were at risk of infection due to a lack of PPE. Such reports of general public hoarding, inadequate PPE logistical chains, and inappropriate PPE conservation measures by hospitals demonstrate the USA’s poor public health response. The NBS calls for an extensive mobilization of adequate PPE in response to a biological outbreak to decrease the pathogen spread, minimize its effects, and improve our resiliency.1 The capability to decrease the pathogen’s effects increases an attacker’s “sunk costs” should they choose to release a biological weapon. An impaired, or presumably impaired, capability adversely affects our defense strategy. In addition, the decrease in cost-to-risk ratio impairs our deterrence measures by showing worsened biological denial. The rapid healthcare PPE disappearance secondary to pandemic panic demonstrated a critical vulnerability in one of the most important defense strategies for a bioterror attack. To improve our defense capability, our healthcare workers must have an adequate supply of PPE, which can be mobilized expeditiously. Bioweapons have a high transmission rate and are easily disseminated, which make airborne and droplet transmission favorable. Public health experts should retrospectively analyze the types and amounts of PPE utilized in areas highly impacted by SARS-CoV-2. With these data, models can be created to make recommendations for phase-based mobilization of PPE and to determine the size of stockpile needed for immediate release. Government agencies need to establish agreements with PPE manufacturers to prioritize production in declared biological emergencies. Anti-Vaccination Movements Non-compliance with recommended public health and protective measures, including vaccines, also cripples our nation’s biodefense. Public health measures such as social distancing, aggressive sanitation, and mask mandates are examples of defense tactics for the COVID-19 pandemic. The individualistic U.S. culture fueled widespread non-compliance with these measures and has had significant effect on our ability to “flatten the curve” compared to other countries.11 The preference for “freedom…without interference from the state” is present in 58% of U.S. citizens, compared to 30-38% of European countries.11 The USA’s inability to uniformly employ these measures and decrease the virus spread compared to other countries signals to adversaries a weakness in our defense to decrease the effects of a biological outbreak. Furthermore, the speculation and conspiracy theories surrounding COVID-19 vaccines suggest an inevitable resistance to receiving the vaccine when available. Resistance to vaccinations is nothing new and caused challenges for vaccination against smallpox in the 19th-century U.K. epidemic.12 Then in 2019, the U.S. measles outbreak was amplified by anti-vaxxer campaigns.13 Since early in the COVID-19 pandemic, social media posts have warned that future coronavirus vaccines contain either tracking devices for the U.S. government or toxic chemicals.13,14 This unopposed and contagious anti-vax movement directly affects future biological deterrence because our adversaries know that the population will not be universally compliant with vaccination and will be susceptible to certain pathogens. Recent polls indicate that one-third of U.S. citizens,14 compared to 14% of U.K. citizens,12 would avoid receiving a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine, even if available and affordable. A poor vaccination rate increases a population’s disease susceptibility and decreases biological weapon deterrence by denial. The anti-vaccination movement has caught traction from massive information operations and propaganda on multiple media platforms. Since May 2020, anti-vaxxers have been propagating lies about the side effects of the coronavirus vaccine, but as of June, the Centers for Disease Control, which is responsible for vaccine education, had only a “plan” to counter such anti-vaccine campaigns.14 When the first vaccines were being administered to healthcare workers in the USA in December 2020, multiple social media efforts were started to promote the vaccine.15 Hashtags such as #vaxup, #IGotTheShot, #vaccineswork, and many more were used with social media posts of doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel receiving their vaccine.16 Some posts continued with threads of updates on any side effects encountered to quell public concerns. Information operations such as these may be more effective to counter the anti-vaccination propaganda than government-sponsored campaigns and require further research by public health officials.

#### Patents are the key to preventing bioweapon development – they prevent technology from being accessible to hostile state and non-state actors

Finlay 10 (Brian Finlay; Summer 2010; The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, *“The Bioterror Pipeline: Big Pharma, Patent Expirations, and New Challenges to Global Security”*; accessed 8/13/21; Brian Finlay is a senior associate at the Stimson Center in Washington, DC, where he directs the Managing Across Boundaries Program. He has worked at the Brookings Institution, the Century Foundation, and Canadas Laboratory Center for Disease Control/Health Canada; pages 54-58; ask me for the pdf) HB

NEW CHALLENGES: THE BIOTECH REVOLUTION AND THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR Myriad private sector actors, ranging from single-employee enterprises to major multinational pharmaceutical giants dominate today's biopharmaceutical marketplace. Privately owned companies not only develop, produce, and operate the lion's share of biological industrial equipment, but carry out the greatest share of the scientific research and development for the relevant technologies, goods, and methods of application. University and other non-profit research is often commercially-funded, and many governments around the globe have built public-private partnerships, even in some of the most sensitive areas of biotechnology, to capitalize on cost reductions and innovation. According to a recent Ernest and Young study of the industry, today more than 80 percent of biotechnology firms-and, thus, the technologies they innovate-are in the hands of the private sector." In the United States, the industry's compound annual growth rate has historically hovered around 15 percent, yielding aggregate revenues of more than $70 billion in 2008.18 With fortunes to be made, unprecedented new applications to be discovered, and practically unlimited possibilities for growth, the biopharmaceutical industry has swelled dramatically over the past decade. It is estimated that the biotech sector supports about 3.2 million jobs across the U.S. economy-a little more than one job for every 100 Americans.' 9 In Europe, publicly traded biotech companies' revenues increased 17 percent in one year, from f9.6 billion in 2007 to £11.2 billion in 2008. And although the recent global financial crisis had a negative impact, the product pipelines of European industry are growing across all phases of clinical development.20 By virtually any measure, the United States and Europe remain unmatched global hubs for biotechnological investment and innovation. For national security analysts, this reality has long provided some measure of comfort. Although the system of security assurances mandated by technologically advanced (principally Western) governments is far from a panacea against biothreats, the absence of similarly robust legal barriers in many countries raises serious international security concerns. 2' For instance, although the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Singapore have all introduced strict regulations on pathogenic agents that may be of interest to committed bioterrorists, most countries have not. Similarly, export controls and enforcement over many sensitive technologies are often extremely lax, particularly in countries of the Global South.22 And because terrorists and proliferant states may shop for pathogens and dual-use production technologies where controls are the weakest, this uneven patchwork of regulations leaves open a significant gap in global biosecurity standards.23 It was in this porous regulatory environment that President Obama released his National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats in November 2009. His plan cited both unparalleled innovations in the life sciences and imperfections in existing control regimes as the principle motivations for a new strategy that seeks to prevent biotechnology products from being used for harmful purposes.24 However, while the President's plan presented a more forward-leaning agenda to counter the rising risk of proliferation by explicitly leveraging public health in support of international security, at its root, the strategy extends the traditional state-centric approaches to a problem that is increasingly one of the private sector. A proper approach to the issue-and its solution set-must place industry at its epicenter. In short, the Obama strategy exemplifies the continued mismatch between governments' near singular focus on regulation of the industry on the one hand, and the elusive nature of privately-driven biotech innovation on the other. Beyond encouraging the industry to adopt more stringent security standards in the public interest, governments have generally proven bereft of innovative ideas that more directly link these measures to the private sector's enlightened self-interest. This mismatch is aggravated by the reality that the biotech and pharmaceutical community stands on the brink of yet another grand transformation that will render traditional control efforts, however effective they may have proven in the past, even more anachronistic. Over the course of the coming decade, the traditional drug development strategies employed so successfully by Western biopharmaceutical companies in the past will run headlong into two realities that will fundamentally alter biopharmaceuticals' business model: continued and rampant globalization of the life sciences and big pharma's patent expiration challenges. These forces will have profound implications on the future of drug development and the internationalization of intellectual property. Further, it threatens to open a new era of biological weapons proliferation by pushing bio-innovation into regions that are ill-prepared to manage the leakage of sensitive knowledge and equipment to those intent on developing biological weapons. Accelerating Globalization of the Life Sciences As globalization began to take firm root in the 1980s, virtually every industrial sector across the Western world sought to capitalize upon its underlying forces to promote efficiency and financial gain. Conceptions of tightly integrated firms whose product development was bound by national borders gave way to an internationalization of R&D, production, and supply chains. Expedited global trade, hastened by advances in everything from information to transportation technologies, allowed profit and efficiency to be maximized through outsourcing, off-shoring, supply-chaining, and other activities that drove intellectual and manufacturing capacity far beyond Western shores. The corresponding transfer of information, processes, and technology generated new local enterprises, including subsidiary operations that collaborated with or competed for global market share. This dynamic, in turn, created a virtuous cycle that accelerated the biotechnological competencies of these new markets. Soon, states that were seen to have lacked the indigenous expertise to perform complex R&D and manufacturing operations began to develop advanced, competitive industrial sectors.25 By the late 1990s, the spread of biotechnological knowledge and equipment allowed even more companies, universities, and research institutes around the world to benefit from advances in the life sciences. Today, developing countries nurture competitive industrial sectors that challenge traditional suppliers in Western Europe. According to the United Nations, many developing countries, including Argentina, Brazil, China, Cuba, Egypt, India, Mexico, and South Africa are already approaching the leading edge of biotechnological applications and have "significant" research capacity in the biosciences.26 In aggregate, this can only be seen as a significant boon to global development. As in the North, the developing South is putting these biotech capacities to work for peaceful purposes. Recent technological breakthroughs are indicative of this new geographic diversity of biological talent: the first vaccine against meningitis B was developed in Cuba; South Africa was the first country involved in HIV-C strain preventive treatment; India is the world's largest producer of the hepatitis B vaccine; and China was the first country to license gene therapy.27 Meanwhile, biotechnology is providing an infusion of high-skilled, stable, and lucrative jobs, and endowing struggling economies with critical growth and diversification. For the security conscious, however, the globalization of biotechnology has also expanded the locus of the bioproliferation challenge from technologically advanced countries of the North into far-flung places around the globe.28 Thus, even as humankind reaps the benefits of the biotech revolution, governments around the world are increasingly challenged by the confluence of rapidly advancing science and technology and by globalization itself. High technical hurdles to isolation and weaponization of dangerous pathogens once confined fears about the development and use of biological weapons to advanced industrial states. But now, the spread of dual-use biotechnologies means that a growing number of countries-and even terrorist groups-may gain access to the capacities necessary to develop a bioweapon.

#### Any reduction in bioweapons threat is key – 1ar impact defense doesn’t account for future technology developments that make them a existential threat

Millett and Snyder-Beattie 17 (Piers Millett and Andrew Snyder-Beattie; 2017; Health Security, Volume 15, Number 4; *“Existential Risk and Cost-Effective Biosecurity”*; accessed 8/13/21; <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/pdf/10.1089/hs.2017.0028>; Piers Millett, PhD, is a Senior Research Fellow, and Andrew Snyder-Beattie, MS, is Director of Research; both at the University of Oxford, Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford, England.; page 378) HB

Why Uncertainty Is Not Cause for Reassurance Each of our estimates rely to some extent on guesswork and remain highly uncertain. Technological breakthroughs in areas such as diagnostics, vaccines, and therapeutics, as well as vastly improved surveillance, or even eventual space colonization, could reduce the chance of disease-related extinction by many orders of magnitude. Other breakthroughs such as highly distributed DNA synthesis or improved understanding of how to construct and modify diseases could increase or decrease the risks. Destabilizing political forces, the breakdown of the Biological Weapons Convention, or warfare between major world powers could vastly increase the amount of investment in bioweapons and create the incentives to actively use knowledge and biotechnology in destructive ways. Each of these factors suggests that our wide estimates could still be many orders of magnitude off from the true risk in this century. But uncertainty is not cause for reassurance. In instances where the probability of a catastrophe is thought to be extremely low (eg, human extinction from bioweapons), greater uncertainty around the estimates will typically imply greater risk of the catastrophe, as we have reduced confidence that the risk is actually at a low level.48 xxx Given that our conservative models are based on historical data, they fail to account for the primary source of future risk: technological development that could radically democratize the ability to build advanced bioweapons. If the cost and required expertise of developing bioweapons falls far enough, the world might enter a phase where offensive capabilities dominate defensive ones. Some scholars, such as Martin Rees, think that humanity has about a 50% chance of going extinct due in large part to such technologies.49 However, incorporating these intuitions and technological conjectures would mean relying on qualitative arguments that would be far more contentious than our conservative estimates. We therefore proceed to assess the cost-effectiveness on the basis of our conservative models, until superior models of the risk emerge.

#### Bioweapon usage causes extinction – increasing development of lethality and spread proves that the threat is increasing – action now to bolster infrastructure is key

Millett and Snyder-Beattie 17 (Piers Millett and Andrew Snyder-Beattie; 2017; Health Security, Volume 15, Number 4; *“Existential Risk and Cost-Effective Biosecurity”*; accessed 8/13/21; <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/pdf/10.1089/hs.2017.0028>; Piers Millett, PhD, is a Senior Research Fellow, and Andrew Snyder-Beattie, MS, is Director of Research; both at the University of Oxford, Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford, England.; page 374) HB

In the modern context, no single disease currently exists that combines the worst-case levels of transmissibility, lethality, resistance to countermeasures, and global reach. But many diseases are proof of principle that each worst-case attribute can be realized independently. For example, some diseases exhibit nearly a 100% case fatality ratio in the absence of treatment, such as rabies or septicemic plague. Other diseases have a track record of spreading to virtually every human community worldwide, such as the 1918 flu,10 and seroprevalence studies indicate that other pathogens, such as chickenpox and HSV-1, can successfully reach over 95% of a population.11,12 Under optimal virulence theory, natural evolution would be an unlikely source for pathogens with the highest possible levels of transmissibility, virulence, and global reach. But advances in biotechnology might allow the creation of diseases that combine such traits. Recent controversy has already emerged over a number of scientific experiments that resulted in viruses with enhanced transmissibility, lethality, and/or the ability to overcome therapeutics.13-17 Other experiments demonstrated that mousepox could be modified to have a 100% case fatality rate and render a vaccine ineffective.18 In addition to transmissibility and lethality, studies have shown that other disease traits, such as incubation time, environmental survival, and available vectors, could be modified as well.19-21 Although these experiments had scientific merit and were not conducted with malicious intent, their implications are still worrying. This is especially true given that there is also a long historical track record of state-run bioweapon research applying cutting-edge science and technology to design agents not previously seen in nature. The Soviet bioweapons program developed agents with traits such as enhanced virulence, resistance to therapies, greater environmental resilience, increased difficulty to diagnose or treat, and which caused unexpected disease presentations and outcomes.22 Delivery capabilities have also been subject to the cutting edge of technical development, with Canadian, US, and UK bioweapon efforts playing a critical role in developing the discipline of aerobiology.23,24 While there is no evidence of staterun bioweapons programs directly attempting to develop or deploy bioweapons that would pose an existential risk, the logic of deterrence and mutually assured destruction could create such incentives in more unstable political environments or following a breakdown of the Biological Weapons Convention.25The possibility of a war between great powers could also increase the pressure to use such weapons—during the World Wars, bioweapons were used across multiple continents, with Germany targeting animals in WWI,26 and Japan using plague to cause an epidemic in China during WWII.27 Non-state actors may also pose a risk, especially those with explicitly omnicidal aims. While rare, there are examples. The Aum Shinrikyo cult in Japan sought biological weapons for the express purpose of causing extinction.28 Environmental groups, such as the Gaia Liberation Front, have argued that ‘‘we can ensure Gaia’s survival only through the extinction of the Humans as a species. we now have the specific technology for doing the job. several different [genetically engineered] viruses could be released’’(quoted in ref. 29). Groups such as R.I.S.E. also sought to protect nature by destroying most of humanity with bioweapons.30 Fortunately, to date, non-state actors have lacked the capabilities needed to pose a catastrophic bioweapons threat, but this could change in future decades as biotechnology becomes more accessible and the pool of experienced users grows.31,32

## 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.

#### 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

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.