

Drone Melancholia

by

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Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the accompanying thesis by Andrew Durand has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in Rhetoric Studies.

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Abstract

This project attempts to extend the work of Barbara Biesecker in *No Time for Mourning: The Rhetorical Production of the Melancholic Citizen-Subject in the War on Terror* by applying her theory of melancholic rhetoric to President Obama's speech at the National Defense University (NDU). The War on Terror has changed since the initial publication of Biesecker's work. I trace the history of the drone program through the War on Terror and ultimately argue that the melancholic rhetoric employed by President Obama has facilitated the continued use of drones as a counter-terrorism tactic. This paper suggests that there are three distinct tropes present in melancholic rhetoric and each serves a necessary function to the ultimate success of the rhetorical act. The creation of an omen of loss, the invocation of a state of emergency, and the creation of a state of exception all work to enact a melancholic loss within the audience of melancholic rhetoric. I conclude that like President Bush, Obama invokes melancholic rhetoric in order to facilitate the continuation of war fighting efforts. The similarities found between Bush and Obama provides empirical support to rhetorical criticism that seeks to be a more predictive tool. An analysis of melancholic rhetoric can aid in the understanding of the future effects of presidential rhetoric.

The War on Terror

The war on terror is marked by several evolutions of the warfighting paradigm during the 21st century. The goals of combat have changed from ground to ground peace-keeping operations to air-based insurgent disruption. Aerial drones have become an iconic component of this constantly evolving warfighting effort. As time goes on the use of drones continues to increase to peculiar effect.

The history of the drone program remains fairly clandestine. In the 1990s U.S. drones were used purely as reconnaissance tools in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq.¹ Over time military officials began to recognize that the potential benefits of drones may not have been fully exhausted. Even though the benefits of drones were becoming more accepted there was still dissent among government officials about how the drone program should develop—the air force was interested in more “jet-like” drones while the CIA remained committed to smaller, more surveillance oriented drones.² Both parties, however, agreed that arming drones was worthwhile. The drone program continued as a surveillance only operation due to political rancor over whether or not actually arming the drone was a good decision.³ It was not until September 11, 2001, that the decision to arm drones was made. Five days later, on September 16, 2001, unarmed predator drones were sent to Afghanistan.

In November 2001 a precedent was set when drones were first used for offensive missions. Working in tandem with F-15 Strike Eagle fighter jets, a CIA operated Predator drone launched two hellfire missiles as a follow up strike on a hotel

1 John Kaag and Sarah Kreps, *Drone Warfare* (UK: Polity Press, 2014), 17.

2 Kaag and Kreps, *Drone Warfare*, 17.

3 The technology existed, but as of yet was not implemented.

where Al Qaeda officials were suspected of meeting. The hellfire missiles lit the hotel ablaze and close to 100 people were killed.⁴

This drone strike would become part of a broader initiative that was put in place by President George W. Bush henceforth referred to as the Bush Doctrine. While traditionally conceptualized as an extension of the cold war doctrine of deterrence, the Bush Doctrine differed in that it was offensive rather than defensive. Additionally, the Bush Doctrine created exceptional circumstances where only the US is able to engage in preemptive strikes and also became viewed as a transformative power in the international sphere.⁵ After the attacks of September 11,

Bush outlined a policy of opposing terrorism with military force everywhere it exists, and also taking military action against foreign governments that harbor and support terrorists. This [...] also includes the assassination of terrorists and foreign leaders implicated in terrorism against Americans.⁶

The goals laid out by Bush lend themselves to a wide array of tactics for completion. For the most part though, these missions were carried out by ground troops and jet fighters.

Along with the deployment of armed drones, on October 7, 2001 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld outlined the goals of Operation Enduring Freedom. Rumsfeld explained that Operation Enduring Freedom would be both a counterterrorism and humanitarian operation. Skepticism arose as the nation grew concerned with “air-dropping humanitarian supplies at the same time as conducting a

4 “U.S. Kills Al Qaeda Leaders by Remote Control,” Foxnews.com last modified November 19, 2001, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2001/11/19/us-kills-al-qaeda-leaders-by-remote-control.html>

5 Tom Lansford, Robert Watson, and Jack Covarrubias, *America's War on Terror*, 2nd ed. (Farnham, England, Vermont: Ashgate, 2009), 46.

6 Lansford, Watson, and Covarrubias. *America's War on Terror* 2nd ed., 45.

bombing campaign.”⁷ At this time a large majority of all bombings were carried out by United States and ally jets. Between 2001 and 2004 Operation Enduring Freedom may have caused upwards of 4000 civilian deaths.⁸

In March 2003 the war on terror expanded its reach when the United States invaded Iraq. The White House worked to draw connections between the war on terror that was happening in Afghanistan with Saddam Hussein in Iraq. This was done through “lies about Saddam Hussein’s purported involvement in 9/11 and the ‘imminent threat’ he posed to the United States because of his supposed possession of weapons of mass destruction.”⁹ Since 9/11 the U.S.’s definition of terrorism has been interpreted broadly to allow the government to identify any action that is contrary to its goals as being a threat to the country. The war in Iraq did not bring weaponized drones to the battlefield but instead touted the use of “smart” bombs as effective alternatives to traditional munitions that would ensure minimal civilian casualties. In contrast to the Gulf War, which was heavily centered on traditional dumb bombs, “70 percent of the munitions dropped a dozen years later were laser-guided “smart” bombs.”¹⁰ The Bush administration began a line of justification that Obama’s administration would take up: as long as our technology works to prevent civilian deaths, its use is justified.

Towards the end of the Bush presidency, the drone program truly began coming into its own. Government demand for drones was increasing and private companies were more than happy to oblige with order requests. Specifically, “in 2000, the

7 Lansford, Watson, and Covarrubias, 62.

8 Lansford, Watson, and Covarrubias, 63.

9 Medea Benjamin, *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control* (London: Verso, 2013), 4.

10 Benjamin, *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*, 4.

Pentagon had fewer than fifty aerial drones; ten years later, it had nearly 7500.”¹¹

While the supply of drones began steadily increasing, the Bush administration still favored the use of drones for surveillance-oriented missions. It was not until the end of Bush’s first term that any inkling of a policy change was on the horizon. In 2003 the US Air Force Chief of Staff gave the first indication of a changed policy stating, “We’ve moved from using UAVs primarily in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance roles before Operation Iraqi Freedom, to a true hunter-killer role.”¹²

The role of drones expanded under the Bush Administration so that not only could a drone spot a target, but it could also respond. As the role of the drone expanded greater flexibility was afforded to military officers. The American public responded positively to the idea of taking United States soldiers out of harm’s way. During Bush’s presidency, drones were used in three key ways after they were armed: drones provided air support, surveyed battlegrounds, and conducted targeted killings.¹³

While the offensive use of drones began during the Bush administration, most drone strikes have occurred during the Obama administration. On January 23, 2009 President Barack Obama carried out his first drone operation.¹⁴ The first drone strike of the Obama administration occurred just three days after the newly elected president’s inauguration. In what would come to be a hallmark of drone strike misinformation, the attack which was supposed to be carried out against a suspected terrorist hide-out, instead destroyed the home of Pakistani elder Malik Gulistan Khan.¹⁵ The first strike of

11 Benjamin, 16-17.

12 T. Michael Moseley quoted in Benjamin, 18.

13 Benjamin, 18

14 Benjamin, 7

15 Benjamin, 7

the Obama administration paints a picture that statistics indicate has continued. Between 2004 and 2007 the Bush administration carried out only nine strikes, in the last year of Bush presidency that number jumped up to forty five total drone strikes.¹⁶ The Obama administration, focusing primarily on Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, carried out 295 strikes in Pakistan alone between the years of 2009 and 2012.¹⁷ This large number of strikes resulted in civilian casualties and spurred public discussion that culminated in a *New York Times* report detailing the decision process for carrying out a drone strike under the Obama Administration. The report included such brazen titles as “Terror Tuesday” a day when officials would meet to discuss who would become a candidate for a drone strike.¹⁸ Amidst a vocal minority criticizing the drone program for its inaccuracy and unnecessary civilian casualties, an overwhelming majority of the country supported the drone program. All of this discourse occurred in public culture yet not at the highest levels of political administration, because as of yet, Obama had not formally discussed the drone program.¹⁹

It was not until Obama delivered a speech on May 23, 2013 at the National Defense University (NDU) that the topic of drones was brought into the public forum by the Office of the President. By this time, drones had become a hot button issue in the United States. In the months immediately preceding Obama’s speech at the NDU, drones had made two prominent appearances in government discourse. First, in February 2013, a Department of Justice white paper was released that justified killing

16 Benjamin, 16

17 Benjamin, 16

18 Benjamin, 8

19 President Obama did briefly address the drone program during a google chat that occurred on January 30th 2012.

Americans abroad affiliated with Al- Qaeda with drones, such as Anwar al-Awlaki.²⁰ In tandem with the white paper release, the appointment of John Brennan to the position of Director of the CIA amplified unease as the American population slowly realized the drone program was much larger than its media presence would suggest. While the majority of Americans still believed that drone strikes carried out in the Middle East are acceptable, concern grew over whether or not that same technology would be used domestically.²¹ The NDU was a strategic place for President Obama to deliver publically his thoughts on drones. Located in Washington D.C inside the U.S. security apparatus, Obama picked a location that would be amenable and understanding to his opinions regarding the use of drones. Simultaneously, the NDU offered the President the opportunity to speak to the men and women that would be carrying out these drone strikes in the future.

Obama's speech parallels similar logic used by the Bush administration to justify the war on terror which I argue facilitated the necessary discourse for the emergence of the ongoing drone campaign. I will use Obama's NDU speech as an artifact to support my extension of Barbara Biesecker's work on the "melancholic citizen-subject." My research will work to parallel the rhetoric used by President George W. Bush to justify the war on terror with the rhetoric used by President Obama to continue the practice of deploying drones for targeted killing operations. I will argue that like the Bush administration, the Obama administration relies on a melancholic

²⁰ DOJ released white paper, *NBC News*, last accessed September 29, 2015 at http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/i/msnbc/sections/news/020413_DOJ_White_Paper.pdf, 1.

²¹ Kaag and Kreps, 19-20

citizenry. Obama utilizes this rhetoric in order to justify the violent intervention of the drone program by framing it as an effective way to maintain the fantasy of democracy.

The fantasy of democracy represents the object which causes melancholia to occur in the American subject. Throughout the war on terror, the fear and anxiety that the American people have faced says more about the psyche of the nation than about the current state of international affairs. How that melancholia functions within individual subjects remains the focus of academic debate.

Melancholia

In order to discuss the effects of Obama's melancholic rhetoric it will first be important to understand what melancholia is in this context and how that term has been adopted by theorists. The debate in the theorizing of melancholia centers on the original loss that creates melancholia. Some theorists believe that the lost object is something that in fact exists or did exist but is now prohibited, while others believe that the original loss never existed in the first place insofar as what appears to be lost was never possessed. This distinction is critical because it delineates Biesecker's account of melancholic rhetoric from any alternative conceptions. In order to crystalize that distinction I will outline the debate surrounding melancholia theorization using the works of Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler, José Muñoz, Slavoj Žižek, and Barbara Biesecker.

Most melancholia theorists treat Sigmund Freud's work as foundational. In 1917 Freud first theorized melancholia in *Mourning and Melancholia*. Freud describes melancholia as being in relation to mourning, stating that the main distinction is,

a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment.²²

Melancholia for Freud represents a loss that is constantly being processed, the subject never achieves the desired wholeness that grieving is meant to restore. The difference between the process of melancholia and mourning is that mourning is finite whereas

²² Sigmund Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia* (London: Hogarth Press, 1917), 244.

melancholia is a constant process of acknowledging the lost object. There are other ways that Freud believes the functionings of melancholia usurp those of mourning: “in melancholia the relation to the object is no simple one; it is complicated by the conflict due to ambivalence. The ambivalence is either constitutional [...] or else it proceeds precisely from those experiences that involved the threat of losing the object.”²³

Melancholia extends beyond mourning for Freud because the lost object must not be gone but rather possess the threat of loss. Thus, the threat of loss implies ways for melancholia to be activated without a lost object at all. Freud himself admits he is unable to describe the telos of melancholia, “we cannot tell which of these two possibilities is the regular or more usual one in bringing melancholia to an end, nor what influence this termination has on the future of the case.”²⁴ The two possibilities Freud refers to are the potential outcomes of the melancholic subject. One interpretation posits a complete overcoming of the lost object while the other believes the lost object has an essential permanence. Freud’s inability to outline what causes melancholia to end provides an open question to future theorists that attempt to explain the nature of melancholia.

After Freud several theorists have attempted to expand the idea of melancholia that was defined almost a century ago. In what is to follow I will outline how Freud has been taken up by others. Outlining the views of alternative theorizations of melancholia as given by Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler, José Muñoz, Slavoj Žižek, and Barbara

23 Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*, 256.

24 Freud, 257.

Biesecker will also provide insight into the agreements and disagreements that emerge between various conceptualizations.²⁵

Giorgio Agamben

Giorgio Agamben expands on the work of Freud to theorize that the object cause of melancholia is not located in a material reality but instead in a fantasy of presence that cannot be created or destroyed. When discussing melancholia, Agamben compares the process to the religious admonitions against sloth. Like melancholia, sloth was conceived as, “the withdrawal from a good that had not yet been lost and who interpreted the most terrible of its daughters, despair as an anticipation of unfulfillment and damnation.”²⁶ Agamben creates a parallel between the fear of loss that is theorized by Freud and an anticipation of damnation. The connection between fear of a loss and a sort of preemptive anticipation however is insufficient for Agamben because it fails to address the constitutive lack. Instead Agamben takes melancholia a step beyond Freud by stating that melancholia is,

a frantic exacerbation of desire that renders its object inaccessible to itself in the desperate attempt to protect itself from the loss of that object and to adhere to it at least in its absence [...] so it might be said that the withdrawal of melancholic libido has no other purpose than to make viable an appropriation in a situation in which none is really possible.²⁷

25 While Agamben and the other theorists discussed do not directly impact the direction of this discussion, it is necessary to include them in order to provide clarity to what is meant when the term “melancholic rhetoric” is deployed. The theories discussed below are meant to frame a broader debate occurring among contemporary theorists about the nature of melancholia and partially demonstrate how each theory would reach different conclusions when discussing “melancholic rhetoric.”

26 Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 20.

27 Agamben, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, 20.

This alludes to the argument that melancholia does not emerge from the loss of an object or even from the fear that an object may be lost. Instead melancholia emerges when a subject fears the loss of an object that was never there to begin with. According to Agamben, “from this point of view, melancholy would not be so much the regressive reaction to the loss of the love object as the imaginary capacity to make an unattainable object appear as if lost.”²⁸ The idea that melancholia can emerge from subjects’ fears is an enticing proposition for an analysis of melancholic rhetoric that seeks to understand how symbolic action can galvanize a public response.

Judith Butler

Judith Butler also offers a unique theory of melancholia in her work *The Psychic Life of Power*. Butler agrees and disagrees with other contemporary theories of melancholia, including those provided by Agamben. Butler defines melancholia as, “an emphatic and irreversible loss that forms the tenuous basis of that being.”²⁹ Like Agamben, Butler believes that melancholia is not something that is able to be overcome by a restoration of a lost object. Unlike Agamben, however, Butler posits that the lost object is something that not only exists, but exists as an a priori constituent of subjectivity. Butler provides more variation in the preliminary causes of melancholia, opting away from the rigidity of Agamben’s conceptualization which denies the possibility of existence for the lost object. Butler states, “On the one hand, melancholia is an attachment that substitutes for an attachment that is broken, gone, or impossible; on the other hand, melancholia continues the tradition of impossibility, as

28 Agamben, 20.

29 Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (California: Stanford University Press, 1997), 23.

it were, that belongs to the attachment for which it substitutes.”³⁰ Butler argues that melancholia can occur both from the loss of an object that never existed in the first place as well as from the loss an object that at one point was possessed. The openness Butler has to the possibilities of melancholia remains true to Freudian tradition, from which Agamben departs. Butler utilizes her definition of melancholia in order to create a theory of gender. The theory of gender that Butler proposes is one that is based on the originary loss that she understands as the cause of melancholia,

consider that gender is acquired at least in part through the repudiation of homosexual attachments; the girl becomes a girl through being subject to a prohibition which bars the mother as an object of desire and installs that barred object as a part of the ego, indeed, as a melancholic identification. Thus the identification contains within it both the prohibition and the desire.³¹

Again, Butler cements her notion of melancholia as being able to be caused by the loss of a material object. In the case of sexuality, that lost object is the sexual desire for similar sexes. Butler suggests that not only could melancholia occur through a real prohibition it also could have a constructive effect on the subject identity of the melancholic. The differing turns that Butler and Agamben take are indicative of the broader debate within melancholia scholarship. The fundamental disagreement stemming from where and when melancholia occurs has profound impacts on the conclusions that can be drawn from melancholic rhetoric.

José Muñoz

The question of sexuality and melancholia is one that is also taken up by José Muñoz. Muñoz defines melancholia as, “the subject's inability to work out the

30 Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*, 24.

31 Butler, 136.

problems or contradictions the object and its loss produce.”³² The common thread running between all modern theories of melancholia is this notion of “working through” the condition which is caused by the loss of the object. For Muñoz this “working through” is a structure of feeling that is largely ambivalent. “Working through” is not fueled by the fear of loss described by Agamben and Freud. Melancholia is useful to Muñoz not as a tool of discovering the inner workings of the psyche but rather as an analogy to another concept called “disidentification.” For Muñoz melancholia and disidentification share “an ambivalent structure of feeling that works to retain the problematic object and tap into the energies that are produced by contradictions and ambivalences.”³³ The “problematic object” does not give much insight into the nature of the object cause of melancholia. For Muñoz, the origin of melancholia is not as important as the affective qualities that it attributes to subjects that are working through a loss. Muñoz takes a step in a new direction using the film *Looking for Langston* as an example. He argues,

“melancholia, for blacks and queers of any color, is not pathology but an integral part of everyday lives. The melancholia that occupies the minds of the communities under siege in this film can be seen as the revised version of melancholia that Freud wrote about in his later years.”³⁴

Muñoz continues the tradition of arguing that melancholia is not something that can ever fully be worked through. Although it is only Muñoz and Butler who see that

32 José Muñoz, “Photographies of Mourning: Melancholia and Ambivalence in Van Der Zee, Mapplethorpe, and *Looking for Langston*,” In *Race and the Subject of Masculinities*, edited by Harry and Michael Uebel Stecopoulos (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 351.

33 José Muñoz, “Photographies of Mourning: Melancholia and Ambivalence in Van Der Zee, Mapplethorpe, and *Looking for Langston*,” 351.

34 José Muñoz, 355.

melancholia as an essential part of identity. This theorization has resulted in analysis that favors the self over the political. Muñoz argues that melancholia amounts to a condition that is experienced as a facet of life that is ever present.

Slavoj Žižek and Barbara Biesecker

Slavoj Žižek's theorization of melancholia in *Melancholy and the Act* deviates from Freud in key ways. Žižek takes aim at the opposition Freud constructs between normal mourning and pathological melancholy:

Against Freud, one should assert the conceptual and ethical primacy of melancholy. In the process of the loss, there is always a remainder that cannot be integrated through the work of mourning, and the ultimate fidelity is the fidelity to this remainder. Mourning is a kind of betrayal, the second killing of the (lost) object, while the melancholic subject remains faithful to the lost object, refusing to renounce his or her attachment to it.³⁵

The remainder that is established by the initial loss is, for Žižek, the cause of the “working through” to take place. Because that remainder can never be fully integrated through mourning, melancholia will occur perpetually and the melancholic subject will never return to the ordinary state of completeness. Žižek ultimately aligns himself more with the work of Agamben rather than with Butler or Muñoz. This alignment is due in part to the belief that the lost object never existed in the first place: “what melancholy obfuscates is that the object is lacking from the very beginning, that its emergence coincides with its lack, that this object is nothing but the positivization of a void or lack, a purely anamorphic entity that does not exist in itself.”³⁶ The object that is lost for Žižek is the object of desire that was never attainable. What causes

35 Slavoj Žižek, "Melancholy and the Act," *Critical Inquiry* 26, no. 4 (2000): 658.

36 Žižek, "Melancholy and the Act," 660.

melancholia then is not the event of the loss of an object, but rather the positive understanding that the object was never there to begin with. The next move that Žižek makes is the distinction between the object and the object cause of desire, a theory that he draws from Jacques Lacan. Žižek states, “the melancholic is not primarily the subject fixated on the lost object, unable to perform the work of mourning, but rather the subject who possesses the object but has lost his desire for it because the cause that made him desire this object has withdrawn.”³⁷ Here Žižek inverts a more traditional understanding of melancholia. Rather than melancholia being enacted via a working through of the object that is lost, Žižek posits that it may in fact be the opposite. Melancholia then is the acquisition of the desired object paired simultaneously with the loss of the desire for that object. Once an object of desire has been achieved, it has been lost, this cyclical problematic forces melancholia into a constant state of existence.

Barbara Biesecker leverages the work of Žižek to provide her own definition of melancholia. Biesecker argues that melancholia is, “the loss of an impossible object, ideal, or relation that the subject has never had.”³⁸ Biesecker expands the idea of the object lost by including ideological relations that may not take on the formal qualities of objects themselves. Further, Biesecker undercuts the work of individuals like Butler and Muñoz by arguing that the object does not exist nor did it ever exist. To buttress her argument, Biesecker turns to the work of Žižek: “On Žižek’s view, their accounts

³⁷ Žižek, 662.

³⁸ Barbara A. Biesecker, "No Time for Mourning: The Rhetorical Production of the Melancholic Citizen-Subject in the War on Terror," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 40, no. 1 (2007): 154.

fail theoretically, politically and ethically because they are not melancholic enough.”³⁹ Biesecker abandons the reactionary goals of Butler and Muñoz because they would provide no explanatory power for the nature of events that have yet to occur. Further, what neither Butler nor Muñoz address is the fundamental lack inherent to subjectivity. Biesecker argues that, “the way out of the ideological enclosure is not to confront what we experience as reality but, instead, “to traverse the phantasy” that shores it up so as to come face to shadowy face with the fundamental lack, split, or antagonism around which our putative reality has been structured.”⁴⁰ The projects of Muñoz and Butler centered on constructing identity around a prohibition or loss that is achieved in life is insufficient to both Biesecker and Žižek because those structures always attempt to create a wholeness in the subject that will never be attainable.

The label of “reactionary” is particularly problematic for Biesecker and those that utilize her work due to the challenge that she has laid out in this work. Citing Derrida she says, “The condition of possibility of this thing called responsibility is a certain experience and experiment of the possibility of the impossible; the testing of the aporia from which one may invent the only possible invention, the impossible invention. (Derrida 1992, 41). Let us begin, again, to think what’s next.”⁴¹ The work of Biesecker and Žižek are of particular value for this project because they provide a form of using melancholia not as a tool for analyzing the outcomes of past events but rather as a tool for theorizing how the future could be affected by melancholic powers.

39 Biesecker, "No Time for Mourning: The Rhetorical Production of the Melancholic Citizen-Subject in the War on Terror," 150.

40 Biesecker, 151.

41 Biesecker, 165-166.

In his piece, *On dead subjects: a rejoinder to Lundberg on (a) psychoanalytic rhetoric* Joshua Gunn provides a hearty defense of psychoanalysis as a tool in the rhetorical critic's arsenal. Gunn notes, "for those of us 'sophisticated modernists' interested in subjectivity and agency (indeed, identity), psychoanalysis of any variety lends itself nicely to reckoning with contemporary passings in a manner that preserves rhetorical criticism as a dialectical project."⁴² Psychoanalysis and rhetoric are aligned with one another through a focus on subjectivity and agency though they reach different conclusions. The focus of each respective field lends itself to the inclusion of the other. Both psychoanalysis and rhetoric attempt to understand the Symbolic in some sort of way:

Reckoning with the Symbolic as a theoretical project requires the insights of practical application in criticism, but such a reckoning is also a two-step process that mirrors the work of analysis, from the ego to the subject of the unconscious, from the Imaginary to the Symbolic, from criticism to analysis, from the phantasmic to the tropological, from melancholia to mourning.⁴³

These psychoanalytic tools provide insight into subjectivity and agency, as well as buttress the merits of criticism generally. The two step process described by Gunn describes how speech acts cannot be interpreted merely through criticism. They require an intermediary form that can translate between the Real and the Symbolic.

Towards Reading Melancholia

Barbara Biesecker reads melancholia through speeches given by President Bush after the attacks of 9/11 by focusing on three key elements. First, Biesecker notes a

42 Joshua Gunn, "On Dead Subjects: A Rejoinder to Lundberg on (a) Psychoanalytic Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 4 (2004): 508.

43 Gunn, "On Dead Subjects: A Rejoinder to Lundberg on (a) Psychoanalytic Rhetoric," 508-9.

climate of insecurity built around an omen of loss. Second, this omen is related to an ongoing state of emergency. Finally, Biesecker explicates how that state of emergency functions to create a new state of exception.

The omen of loss is used by Biesecker to create an impetus for response within the melancholic subject. Rather than rhetorically constructing the events of 9/11 as just a historical moment, Biesecker sees potential in the rhetorical construction for loss to cause action, “the events of 9/11 must be deciphered as the sign, indeed omen, of an incomparable, Absolute loss that will have been ours were we to refuse to answer to it.”⁴⁴ Biesecker’s first move is to identify the galvanizing force that puts melancholia into action. This is a critical first step because it highlights how melancholia may exist within the American subject and be used politically.

Next, Biesecker highlights how the omen of loss is used by Bush to create a perpetual state of emergency. The omen loss in the American psyche is used to discuss, “a state of emergency that is indefinitely extended—temporally and spatially.”⁴⁵ The development of the idea of a state of emergency is a critical step for Biesecker because it helps explain how the unprecedented fear of loss can be activated to justify unprecedented military action. Biesecker notes the significance of this shift when she states, “Out of this state of emergency has emerged a new kind of State. If that is not a post-9/11 melancholic rhetoric’s most spectacular achievement, it surely will be its most enduring effect.”⁴⁶ The new kind of state that Biesecker is alluding to is also her third turn, the state of exception.

44 Biesecker, 153.

45 Biesecker, 155.

46 Biesecker, 155.

The radical potential for action that the melancholic subject allows presidential figures during war represents a total reconfiguration of the state via its limitations and capabilities. These new potentialities are understood by Biesecker as, “a crusade without reserve: a boundless state of exception in which what comes to light and will function as reason is, as Hannah Arendt observed a long time ago, the principle according to which anything is possible.”⁴⁷ The state of exception is critical for Biesecker’s argument because it provides a theoretical backing explaining how the activation of a melancholic subject expands the capabilities of the rhetor that invokes the fear of a loss that could cause melancholia to emerge.

Biesecker provides an account of melancholia activated in relation to national security in three distinct ways. First, an omen of loss is attached to a catastrophic event that destabilizes the psyche of those related. Second, that omen fosters feelings of insecurity that create a state of emergency that allows dramatic action to be taken to quell the loss experienced. Finally, the state of emergency reaches its logical conclusion at the state of exception where any action is allowed to occur to prevent a loss caused by a terrorist attack because the fear of melancholia outweighs any potential decision calculus. The following will demonstrate how these three tropes are present in both the rhetoric of Bush and Obama.

47 Biesecker, 155.

The Tropes of Melancholia

The rhetoric deployed by Obama during his address at the NDU mimics the same tropes that Bush used to activate the melancholic citizen-subject after the attacks on 9/11. The invocation of melancholia stirs the audience of both Bush and Obama in to action. While Bush was more interested in generating support for the war on terror, Obama is more interested in continuing violent interventions abroad through the drone program. The three tropes, an omen of loss, a state of emergency, and a state of exception, that Biesecker believes activate melancholia in the speeches given by Bush are also present in Obama's NDU address. To begin, I will read through Biesecker's analysis of Bush in order to create a measuring stick that will then be applied to the rhetoric of Obama. Although alternative methods of analysis may forgo such a return, the strength of this project rests in its ability to draw textual parallels that exist between Bush and Obama in order to demonstrate how rhetoric can reach similar ends absent the agent.

The first trope that Biesecker highlights in Bush's rhetoric is the omen of loss. The omen of loss is made apparent through vague invocations of a threat that could destabilize the entire nation. To establish this sentiment, Biesecker quotes Bush as saying, "In our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom—the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time—now depends on us."⁴⁸ Biesecker reads Bush as constructing an omen of loss that could only be resolved if the United States takes military action. The melancholic subject is activated by the fear of a loss that could be

48 Bush quoted in Biesecker, 153.

forthcoming. “Freedom” being at war insinuates that freedom itself could ultimately become a casualty. The destruction of freedom is a horrific proposition to Bush’s audience because of its understanding as a constitutive part of American identity. The illusion of wholeness is present in the American psyche. Freedom is constructed as present in American life in a way that shapes the subjectivities of the American audience. The potential loss invoked by Bush works to galvanize support for the war on terror. By exalting American values, the threat of their loss becomes a proposition powerful enough to stir the public to action. It is not just the illusion of wholeness that galvanizes the public; Americans believing that they have freedom is insufficient unless that freedom is understood as something that could be denied. Bush also places an imperative on the audience by constructing his rhetoric to imply that a wholeness of the American psyche depends on the actions of Americans in the coming military engagement. Wholeness could only be maintained not just by a warfighting effort on the executive level but also through active support on the public level.

Biesecker further reads Bush’s speech to show how melancholic rhetoric must not only allude to a loss but must also construct a reason for why wholeness would be lost in the first place. Biesecker quotes the following from Bush to establish such a premise, “Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government.... They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.”⁴⁹ Biesecker astutely points out that not only does Bush create an omen of a loss, but also adds veracity to that threat of loss by

49 Bush quoted in Biesecker, 154.

highlighting an animosity the terrorist other feels towards apparently natural facets of the American way of life. This animosity functions to excite and amplify the omen of loss that was previously mentioned. Not only does the terrorist other possess the means to disrupt the American way of life, they are constructed as also possessing the motivation to destroy that constitutive freedom.

The second trope that Biesecker identifies in the rhetoric of Bush is the invocation of a state of emergency. Bush states, “This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion... Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen.”⁵⁰ This quote is read by Biesecker as the creation of a state of emergency. By constructing the soon commencing battle as a drawn out endeavor Bush attempts to afford himself ultimate flexibility in regards to military operations and tactics. A long duration implies a hard fought battle of the type that requires exceptional tactics that go above and beyond what would be available when not in a state of emergency. A state of emergency facilitates an increased freedom of choice for government and military officials when constructing warfighting schemas. Because the anxiety of the subject has already been invoked by the loss that a terrorist attack could create, the proposition of increased warfighting abilities with less oversight and regulations is tantalizing. Increased capabilities become a stand in for the effective protection against the loss that a terrorist attack could potentially evoke. Bush however is not so ready to only have military tools at his disposal in the war against terror. He states,

50 Bush quoted in Biesecker, 154.

We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.⁵¹

Under this newly constructed state of emergency every tool will be at the government's fingertips for the purpose of combatting and defeating a terrorist threat that is so massive that it could undermine and disrupt the fantasy that American life is built upon. The invocation of every tool of American power to end the threat of terrorism the United States faces represents the third trope that Biesecker isolates in the rhetoric of Bush, the state of exception.

The state of exception marks the moment where the law does not dictate the nature of actions, rather the rule of those in positions of power interpret the law in a way that fits their interests. The state of exception is a term of art defined by Giorgio Agamben in his book of the same title. Noting the difficulties of such a term, Agamben states, "In truth, the state of exception is neither external nor internal to the juridical order, and the problem of defining it concerns precisely a threshold, or a zone of indifference, where inside and outside do not exclude each other but rather blur with each other."⁵² This zone of indifference is the place of action for tactics that otherwise would not exist. Biesecker explicates the state of exception created in the rhetoric of Bush,

In this context, this rhetorically reconfigured scene, extraordinary acts will begin to take place, not the least of which have been the dramatic rejuvenation of the national security state via the constitution of the Department of Homeland Security and the Patriot Act, an

51 Bush quoted in Biesecker, 154.

52 Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 23.

unprecedented federal deficit and, last but not least, a decisive shift in American foreign policy.⁵³

The increase in the capabilities and reach of the security state is the facilitated result of a state of emergency rhetoric that prioritizes threat prevention over stability. The traditional functioning of the state is suspended and replaced with a teleology that centers on preventing terrorist attacks that could disrupt structural components of American life, even if that prevention comes at the cost of the structural integrity of everyday life. Bush brushes aside the invocation of the state of exception as merely a new way of thinking: “In defending the peace, we face a threat with no precedent.... For much of the last century, America’s defense relied on the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment. In some cases, those strategies still apply, but new threats also require new thinking.”⁵⁴ The state of exception is justified by Bush through the novel nature of threats that the United States now faces. Extraordinary circumstances require extraordinary actions, and the beginning of the war on terror was no different. New thinking requires thinking of battle differently,

We cannot defend America and our friends by hoping for the best.... If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long.... The war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt its plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge.⁵⁵

To confront threats before they emerge is a new tactic of the Bush regime justified by the state of emergency that birthed the state of exception. At a very basic level, to confront threats before they emerge would entail a paradigm where the terrorist figure is guilty until proven innocent. This inversion of one of the foundational tenants of

53 Biesecker, 155.

54 Bush quoted in Biesecker, 155.

55 Bush quoted in Biesecker, 155.

criminal law in the United States illustrates how the law becomes a tool for leaders to exploit rather than a mechanism that protects individuals from an overzealous government.

Melancholia in Rhetoric

Like Bush, Obama constructs three unique tropes in his speech that fall in line with Biesecker's analysis. Obama establishes an omen of loss, a state of emergency, and a state of exception. The combination of these tropes works to affirm the existence of the drone program by constructing a reality that necessitates its existence.

When President Obama addressed the NDU on May 23, 2013, he did so with conviction. In his speech, Obama set out to justify the use of drones and explain how the warfighting effort was going to move forward. Walking the line between safety and danger, the audience member is never given a solid conviction of how protected the United States really is. I argue that a careful reading of Obama's speech reveals that he employs a melancholic rhetoric through his use of examples of both success and failure of the drone program. This melancholic rhetoric is evoked to support the continuation of counter terrorism efforts abroad. In this chapter, I will analyze the speech with particular attention to the textual evidence for Obama's use of melancholic rhetoric.

Omen of Loss

Obama begins his speech by creating an omen of loss. He offers a juxtaposition of 9/11 and other terror threats to remind the public that even though no tragic loss is on the horizon, one could still be lurking in the future: "There have been no large-scale attacks on the United States, and our homeland is more secure. [...] Now, make no mistake, our nation is still threatened by terrorists. From Benghazi to Boston, we have

been tragically reminded of that truth.”⁵⁶ Immediately, Obama creates a melancholic rhetoric. Benghazi and Boston serve as examples of how such events could threaten to destroy the ideals of the United States. While there is no spectacular event that could destroy the freedom and safety that constitutes U.S. citizens, there are still threats that could cause such a loss. This perpetuation of threats is used to justify military intervention that could protect the U.S. psyche from a loss that affects the nation in the same way as 9/11. In the face of these threats Obama addresses the nation, “what we can do -- what we must do -- is dismantle networks that pose a direct danger to us, and make it less likely for new groups to gain a foothold, all the while maintaining the freedoms and ideals that we defend.”⁵⁷ The defended ideals stand in as a critical component of the self for the United States. Just as 9/11 threatened to take away the freedom and security held so dearly by the U.S. population, so too do these ever-evolving terrorist plots. The loss of these ideals becomes the motivation for action. Obama frames the war on terror not as a way of accomplishing a greater good in the world, but rather as a way to protect the United States from having to mourn the loss of its larger values.

Significantly, in his NDU address, Obama also acknowledges the inevitability of the very threats that the war on terror is supposed to guard against. Harkening back to the words of American forefathers, Obama states, “We have to be mindful of James Madison’s warning that ‘No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual

56 Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University," May 23, 2013, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/remarks-president-national-defense-university>, Paragraph 8.

57 Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University," Paragraph 12.

warfare.’ Neither I, nor any President, can promise the total defeat of terror.’⁵⁸ The loss of the ideals that the warfighting effort is attempting to save becomes an omen of what is to come without proper response. If terrorism will always persist, then the myth of safety and unbridled freedom was something that never existed in the first place.

Melancholia permeates this turn in Obama’s speech. The freedom and security that U.S. forces are trying to protect is never something that would be complete. To justify the drone program as protecting that which is always already incomplete is to harness the fear of mourning to create conditions for future military endeavors. Obama constantly invokes an omen of loss in his speech to create a spectacle of insecurity: “while none of AQAP’s (Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula) efforts approach the scale of 9/11, they have continued to plot acts of terror, like the attempt to blow up an airplane on Christmas Day in 2009.”⁵⁹ The speech frames the warfighting effort as both effective and simultaneously insufficient. The speech also invokes 9/11 to create feelings of grief and mourning within the audience but that same tragedy is simultaneously distanced by the comparison of magnitudes between 9/11 and the potential terrorist attacks that could occur today. Obama varies between invoking the loss of 9/11 to justify the magnitude of threats facing the United States today, without having any present threat usurp the loss of September 11.

State of Emergency

Throughout his NDU address, Obama creates a state of emergency by constructing a threat that could pose catastrophic harm to the United States. On one hand, gravity must be given to the threats that the nation faces today, otherwise the

58 Obama, Paragraph 12.

59 Obama, Paragraph 14.

drone program would not protect the United States from a loss powerful enough to disrupt the nation's feeling of completeness. On the other hand, Obama must be careful not to construct the threats faced by the nation as ones that are able to be brushed aside:

These attacks were all brutal; they were all deadly; and we learned that left unchecked, these threats can grow. The threats that lurk on the horizon create a state of emergency that could only be solved by a continuation of the drone program. If dealt with smartly and proportionally, these threats need not rise to the level that we saw on the eve of 9/11.⁶⁰

The drone program serves to stand in for the intermediary force that is able to prevent catastrophic events during a state of emergency. Much like Bush after 9/11, Obama invokes the power of executive decision making as a key component of a successful effort. Even with the drone program intact and functional, Obama warns against lulling into a state of complacency, "We have to take these threats seriously, and do all that we can to confront them. But as we shape our response, we have to recognize that the scale of this threat closely resembles the types of attacks we faced before 9/11."⁶¹

The notion of security is simultaneously shattered and created by the picture that Obama paints. The audience must recognize that there is indeed insecurity afoot; a state of emergency has emerged. But, with proper guidance and planning, such a crisis could be averted, providing relief to the fearful subjects. The anxiety and fear that is relieved by Obama's assurance of a proper response is invoked by facilitating a state of fear whereby people are encouraged not to underestimate the threats that the country faces. Obama himself indicates that the feelings of wholeness that constitute U.S. subjects as

60 Obama, Paragraph 18.

61 Obama, Paragraph 17.

safe and free is illusory, and to think in such a way would be to underestimate the capabilities of those that wish to harm the United States.

The melancholia at work in Obama's NDU address is concretized by a drive to constantly maintain and work on the security of the United States during a state of emergency. Security is rhetorically constructed as a drive that will not fulfill itself without the constant vigilance of the United States, "we must define our effort not as a boundless 'global war on terror,' but rather as a series of persistent, targeted efforts to dismantle specific networks of violent extremists that threaten America."⁶² The constant upkeep that security requires creates the constant production of warfighting tactics and technologies. The drone program becomes necessitated by the natural progression of security measures in the ongoing history of the United States. In order to further justify the drone program, Obama spends a portion of his speech addressing the effectiveness of the program as a warfighting tactic itself:

Dozens of highly skilled al Qaeda commanders, trainers, bomb makers and operatives have been taken off the battlefield. Plots have been disrupted that would have targeted international aviation, U.S. transit systems, European cities and our troops in Afghanistan. Simply put, these strikes have saved lives.⁶³

Obama frames the effectiveness of the drone program in highly specific terms. Going into detail about all of the components of a terrorist plot that the drone program has helped avert, Obama creates a vivid image of a booming terrorist network that, if it were not for drones, would be manufacturing destruction at a catastrophic rate. Conversely, very little detail is given to the lives that are saved or destroyed. By

62 Obama, Paragraph 23.

63 Obama, Paragraph 31.

suspending analysis of who exactly is being saved, Obama invites his audience to envision themselves in the secure imaginary via the drone program.

State of Exception

The drive to end terrorism and continue the use of drones is strengthened by Obama's repeated avowal that something must be done. Like Bush, every tool must be at the disposal of the executive to end the threat of terrorism. Often the invocation of the state of exception comes at the justification of saving American lives, "We are at war with an organization that right now would kill as many Americans as they could if we did not stop them first."⁶⁴ The ideal condition of security is constructed as only being attainable if there is constant management of threats abroad. The object of desire removes itself from the realm of possibility the second that it is able to be imagined, lest the United States fail to "take these threats seriously." The state of exception is invoked when the deaths of American citizens are constructed as more grievable than the lives of the innocent killed in the drone campaign:

"I must weigh these heartbreaking tragedies against the alternatives. To do nothing in the face of terrorist networks would invite far more civilian casualties -- not just in our cities at home and our facilities abroad, but also in the very places like Sana'a and Kabul and Mogadishu where terrorists seek a foothold."⁶⁵

The state of exception is invoked by Obama's rhetoric through the creation of a qualitative distinction between the value of lives. By constructing a scale through which life can be viewed Obama creates the law not to its text but instead to its context. Because of the exceptional invocation of the state Obama must explicitly speak beyond the confines of the American subject in order to garner the full weight of

64 Obama, Paragraph 32.

65 Obama, Paragraph 38.

the civilian casualties that he attempts to explicate. The drone that inadvertently blows up a school is an afterthought to the American lives that a potential terrorist could destroy. Further, Obama implies that it is only the targets of drone strikes that cause civilian casualties outside of the United States, glossing over the casualties caused by the drone strikes themselves.

Though Obama spends a large portion of his speech advocating for the drone program, he admits that it alone is not sufficient to quell the desire for safety and freedom in the United States. Noting the potential adversities of the current military approach, Obama states,

force alone cannot make us safe. We cannot use force everywhere that a radical ideology takes root; and in the absence of a strategy that reduces the wellspring of extremism, a perpetual war -- through drones or Special Forces or troop deployments -- will prove self-defeating, and alter our country in troubling ways.⁶⁶

While the drone program is an effective form of counter-terrorism, as illustrated by previous parts of the NDU speech, it is not the end all be all of the counter terrorism effort. This move once again displaces the object of desire while implicitly noting that the state of exception may be a solution to the shortcomings of purely military action. The effectiveness of drone strikes and their ability to disrupt terrorist operations is undercut by the inability to use violence to solve all problems. Drones no longer hold the skeleton key to the American fantasy of security and democracy. Instead, they are part of a larger multi-pronged effort that has yet to be accomplished. Once again, Obama makes note of the constant process of ensuring security: "That's why, in the years to come, we will have to keep working hard to strike the appropriate balance

66 Obama, Paragraph 50.

between our need for security and preserving those freedoms that make us who we are.”⁶⁷ The drive has become an integral part of the American self. Along with notions of security and freedom, working to prevent those violations and prevent the melancholic grief that accompanies them is also essential. Preventing the melancholic loss stands in as the preemptive force that Bush describes in his speech. The prevention of loss is synonymous with preemptive force. The law is suspended and the state of exception is invoked. Again, the paradigm of innocent until proven guilty is inverted, in order to prevent loss the guilty must be stopped before they can commit the act.

A Melancholic End

President Obama ends his address by creating an imaginary world of what victory would look like for the United States. Obama states, “Victory will be measured in parents taking their kids to school; immigrants coming to our shores; fans taking in a ballgame; a veteran starting a business; a bustling city street; a citizen shouting her concerns at a President.”⁶⁸ The normalcy of the state of victory implies that the current condition of the United States is anything but. Obama constructs the loss caused by terrorism as disrupting the American way of life and the freedom, security, and democracy that accompany that life. So to imply that victory would create a state of normalcy is to imply that the loss that the nation is attempting to avoid, was never there to begin with.

The application of Biesecker’s theory of melancholic rhetoric to the address given by Obama at the National Defense University suggests that this method of analyzing rhetoric does indeed have predictive power that can help determine the future

67 Obama, Paragraph 60.

68 Obama, Paragraph 108.

of U.S security planning. Successive application of Biesecker's method provides quantitative legitimacy to qualitative claims that rhetoric is more than a reactionary mode of analysis. With this project occurring almost a decade after Biesecker's primary work, it is important to return to her citation of Jacques Derrida, who states, "When the path is clear and given, when a certain knowledge opens up the way in advance, the decision is already made, it might as well be said that there is none to make: irresponsibly, and in good conscience, one simply applies or implements a program."⁶⁹ Here again, the invocation of melancholic rhetoric has secured the public response. By imbuing their speeches with an omen of loss, a state of emergency, and a state of exception both Bush and Obama were able to accomplish what Derrida refers to when he describes knowledge opening up the way in advance.

This reading of Obama's speech extends rhetorical criticism. The invocation of melancholic rhetoric has effects that are often undertheorized within the field of rhetoric. Even when an orator is not utilizing traditional methods of persuasion, they are still structuring how an audience perceives certain situations and events. This structuring of perception necessarily entails a structuring of response. Obama and Bush both construct worldviews rooted within a logic of melancholia. That melancholia is then able to be applied to any situation where the threat of a loss could occur. Persuasion is traditionally not theorized as a psychoanalytic process, but a theory of melancholia as applied to presidential rhetoric allows rhetorical criticism to have a broader influence. Psychoanalysis offers an alternative conception of rhetorical agency

⁶⁹ Derrida quoted in Biesecker, 165.

whereby the speaker is unimportant to the underlying psychological processes provided by the speech itself.

There is also room for an analysis of rhetoric in presidential addresses to make headway into the realm of political theory absent an account of agency. The coherent story created by the melancholic rhetoric of Bush and Obama reproduces a new ideology that masks its fundamental nature, "ideology is not simply a 'false consciousness', an illusory representation of reality; it is, rather, this reality itself which is already to be conceived as 'ideological' -- 'ideological' is a social reality whose very existence implies the non-knowledge of its participants as to its essence."⁷⁰

Melancholic rhetoric operates by not explicitly stating its existence. The reaction that it prefigures can properly be understood as an instance of ideological power. With this understanding the potential for rhetorical analysis is extended beyond theories of persuasion. A rhetorical analysis of melancholia also fills gaps in rhetorical theory stemming from the ability to locate power originating from orators. Melancholic rhetoric is unique because it possesses tools to locate power within the psychological faculties of the speaker and the audience. This location of power remains inaccessible to alternative forms of rhetorical analysis.

The melancholic rhetoric of Obama is both rhetorical and political. Obama attempts to persuade those gathered at the National Defense University that the drone program can inhibit a future loss that could be caused by a terrorist organization. This process is rhetorical, the fear of loss is used as a method to prefigure public support. Simultaneously, this process is political because it instantiates a form of power that is

⁷⁰ Slavoj Žižek, "How Did Marx Invent the Symptom," In *Mapping Ideology*, ed. Slavoj Žižek (London: Verso, 1994), 190.

premised upon the idea of a national security apparatus. What can be learned from these separately occurring yet often intersecting forms of analysis is that psychological tendencies within the minds of a collective can be manipulated and influenced to reach a desired end. It is important to understand how the use of melancholic rhetoric today has implications that will not be known until tomorrow.

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