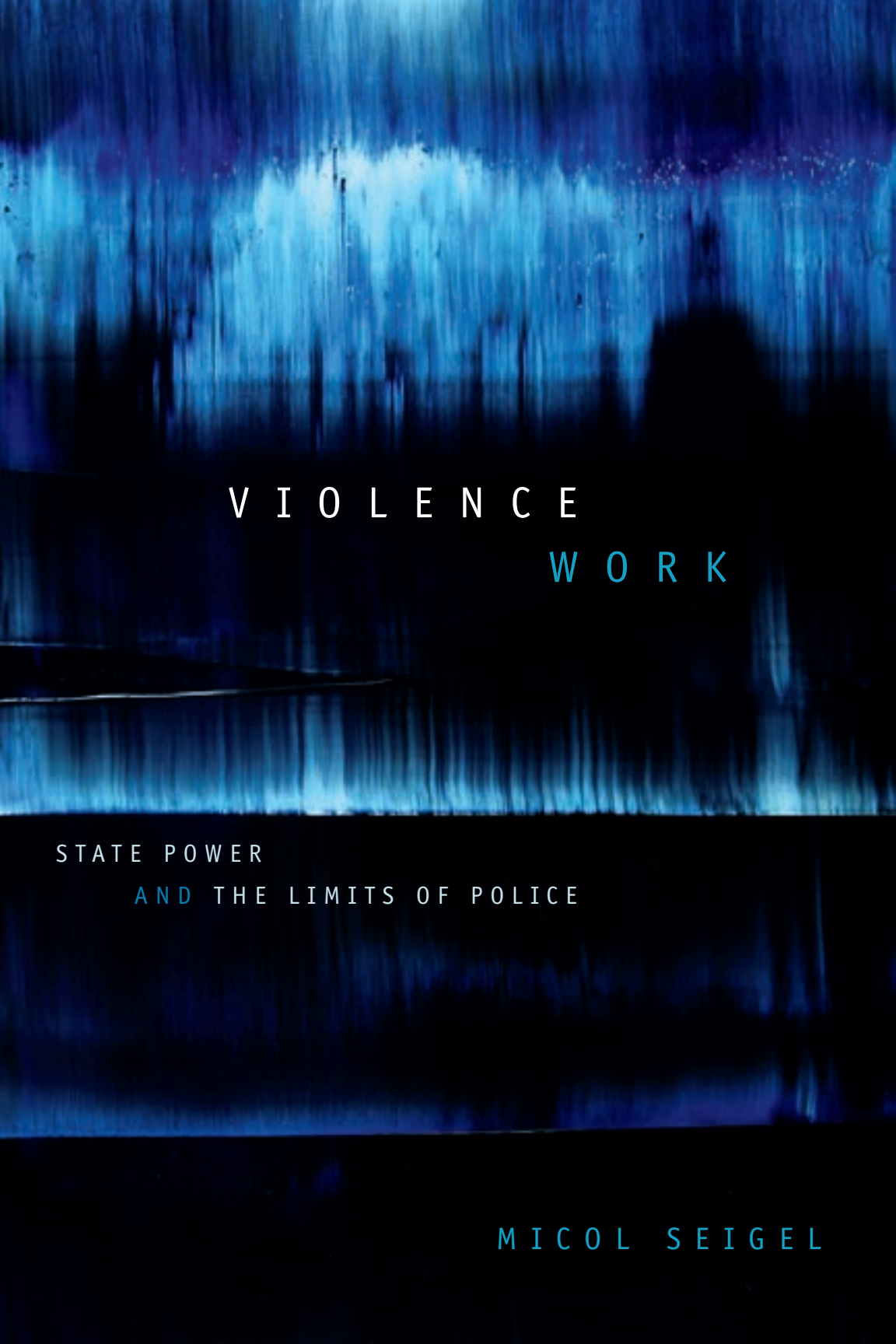
VIOLENCE
WORK
STATE POWER
AND THE LIMITS OF POLICE
MICOL SEIGEL

V I O L E N C E

W O R K

MICOL SEIGEL

VIOLENCE WORK

STATE POWER *and the* LIMITS OF POLICE

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INTRODUCTION

Policing and State Power

. . . not all that is policing lies in the police.

—ROBERT REINER, *The Politics of the Police* (1984)

The controversy that has erupted since the police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, bringing forth the Movement for Black Lives, marks ours as one of those moments unusually resonant with the past. The strikingly visible racial violence, great protest against it, and the gathering storm clouds of reaction recall not only the passage from Reconstruction to Redemption in the US South after the Civil War but also the 1960s and 1970s with their all-too-similar pattern of racist state violence rising to public view, protest and hopefulness about reform, and visceral, reactionary retrenchment.

The devastating lessons of those two periods are particularly important to remember. In the 1870s and 1880s, Redemption fed an early expansion of the US prison system, infinitesimal prior to the Civil War. The labor systems of convict leasing and the chain gang were developed to fit the country's agricultural and industrial economy, anchoring formal racial segregation along with state-sanctioned terror in the form of lynching. The 1960s and 1970s expanded that long historical undercurrent into the scaffolding

of the current criminal justice system, that brutally sturdy cornerstone of Black and brown people's differential vulnerability to premature death, this time organized to warehouse and to idle a workforce no longer needed in the globalized service economy.[1] If we let history repeat itself again, these are the prospects we face.

The early period may be too different from our own to provide guidance for policy, but the 1960s and 1970s are starkly relevant. Police violence was especially important in the 1960s as catalyst to the urban uprisings that spread across the nation between 1964 and 1967. It was often an incident of police abuse of an African American city dweller that sparked the fires.[2] The ways people framed the problems and the solutions they devised echo eerily through contemporary debates about police racism, excessive use of force, brutality, militarization, and community relations.

Protestors in the 1960s and 1970s decried racist police and their brutal treatment of citizens. They denounced the dramatic rise they saw in Black civilian deaths at the hands of police and the great disparity of police-caused Black death—a rate consistently nine times greater than for whites.[3] They picketed the meetings of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, with "its displays of military hardware," insisting that there could be "no answers for crime when justice on the street comes in the form of beatings, harassment, arrests and murder."[4] They pointed out what they called even then the "militarization" of police, charging that in black areas, cops "view each person on the streets as a potential criminal or enemy, and all too often that attitude is reciprocated."[5] Black police officers got involved, calling for communication among black police executives, increasing the number of black police, sensitizing police to the problems of the black community, and confronting racism in criminal justice.[6] They argued for community policing, police-community approximation, police sensitivity trainings, modern technology to remove the opportunity for bias, officer accountability, citizen review boards, and greater police education.[7] Others indicted the "'bad apple' theory of police misconduct," urging instead a structural analysis of state violence overall in relation to political economy.[8] Many protestors today believe that their protests or reform ideas are new; we must remind each other that they are not.[9]

Civil rights–era activists got some of what they wanted. Government bodies, compelled to focus on police, "in part by widespread community outrage over police practices in the ghettos and barrios," sat up, took note, and made changes. Alas, as we now know with hindsight's perfect vision,

the "reforms" they adopted were worse than inadequate. Public outrage was channeled into the narrowest options, "transformed into technocratic concerns about organizational structure and administrative policies" that would not touch the root causes of police racism.[10] These were in many cases the same police reform proposals offered fifty years prior to *that*: professionalize, remove political influence, raise standards, apply modern management techniques.[11] Hopes for "community policing" were particularly high, and therefore crashed especially hard.[12] Policing is at least as lethal as it has ever been, markedly in tandem with the prison system it justifies and feeds.[13]

Given the staggering, historically unprecedented numbers of Americans in prison, there should be no place to go but up. We should be at rock bottom. Yet there is something unique about our moment that augurs even worse. In both of the historical periods that ours evokes, reaction followed the abolition of a great evil: slavery first, and, a century later, Jim Crow segregation. This time we are perched on the edge of reaction without having abolished anything. Mainstream politicians were only just beginning even to *talk* about confronting mass incarceration prior to the 2016 presidential election, and even if such talk continues, existing proposals for shrinking it are tiny, partial, or end up actually feeding the system—"thinning the mesh and widening the net," as Stan Cohen already understood back in 1979.[14]

This kind of reform is not an improvement. But that is what most current proposals for police reform are. Calls for police diversity training, the hiring of officers of color, police body cameras, oversight, accountability, community policing, police-community approximation, police education, and so on all sound an uncanny echo. Like their 1970s predecessors, they will expand and relegitimate the police, and could justify another exponential increase of the number of people under state surveillance and control. It is clearly time to do something different.

A growing number of people think that policing cannot be reformed but only diminished—that the best way to decrease police abuse is to give police the smallest possible role in social life. Calls to defund, disarm, shrink, and even abolish the police are increasingly common.[15] More and more people are realizing that the problem is not individual bad apples or incidental racism or violence, but police, period. As Bryan Wagner has put it, "It's not racial profiling, or police brutality; it's that there is 'police' power functioning in this encounter" at all.[16]

Part of what prevents a critical mass from coming to embrace this position involves a failure to understand what policing actually is and why

people grant it such latitude. What is police power? What are police? Why does it so fundamentally appeal? "Police" is one of the least theorized, most neglected concepts in the lexicon of reformers and activists today. Historians haven't helped.

Historians of the US police have mostly focused on uniformed local police departments. A wave of police history inspired by 1960s and 1970s urban unrest and activism was followed by a turn away, as the conditions that fostered interest in the police also contained the seeds of approaches that would lead historians elsewhere.[17] Social, labor, and ethnic historians, for example, found police less compelling as historical subjects than the people they policed, while for Foucauldians, police were less the point than the laws they applied. Many scholars therefore shifted over to pursue the history of crime rather than police, or of subgroups of police, or of policed populations.[18]

History as a field has also been distracted from the police power by its relative disinterest in theorizing the state. Even friendly observers charge the discipline with "not writing about the state at all," making it "invisible," engaging with it in practice but not approaching it conceptually, and generally evincing reluctance to theorize macrolevel concepts.[19] This reluctance was enhanced in the 1980s by a humanities-wide turn from states to nations and nationalism, and due to some of the same factors pulling historians away from the police: ongoing interest in writing "history from below" and Foucault's injunction to follow capillary power, which inspired wonderfully sophisticated analyses but led historians away from the formal channels of administrative power.[20]

With historians of the police otherwise occupied, much more work on police is produced in the social science fields related to criminal justice, which have been prolific in considering the question. This research is often applied and explicitly reformist, produced in close collaboration with current police officers and contemptuous of scholars removed from the spheres of police action. There the concept is defined as narrowly as possible. Police scholars' "'obsessive preoccupation with the study of public police personnel' . . . insists on identifying contemporary policing with 'the police,'" writes one critic; the field excludes "a vast area of policing . . . from the ambit of 'police studies,'" notes another.[21] The concept of police has been "relegated to the backwater of 'police studies,'" stuck in criminology where no one tries to make sense of the concept itself, "having encouraged the view that policing, like the criminal law of which it is supposedly part, is no more and no less than a set of instruments to manage something called crime."[22]

Against this body of scholarship, an alternative thrives. It is anchored by the indispensable *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (1978). In this groundbreaking book, Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts analyzed the moral panic over "mugging" in Britain in the 1970s, refusing the common sense linking police to safety and pointing out not only that police do not protect all people but that they function to structure and amplify violence, as in the affirmative groundwork they lay to create crime waves and feed "law and order" panics.[23] In the conversation *Policing the Crisis* defines, scholars refute the branches or bases of the popular narrative based on the partiality of the police, their colonial, not metropolitan roots, including the importance of the US slave South in developing the patrol model, the erasure of racism from this rosy-tinted history, the absence of relationship between policing and crime reduction, and more.[24] Today a burgeoning body of tremendously powerful work on policing is emergent.[25] It is in dialogue with and in debt to the range of insightful work now being elaborated in the interdisciplinary field of critical prison studies (a subfield or cofield of critical ethnic studies), where *Violence Work* hopes to belong.[26]

These radical traditions, however, have not made much headway against the densely woven skeins of mainstream scholarship about policing. The dominant narrative of police history is still profoundly conservative and quiescent. It is an apology, produced by pro-police narrators, a tale of noble origins and ever-improving professionalization. It hearkens back to Sir Robert Peel's London Metropolitan Police, corps of the benevolent "Bobby" of 1829. Cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, and New York created these London-style police departments, or so goes the tale, driven by the pressures of crime due to immigration and urbanization, drawing on working-class ethnics and with an emphasis on social service provision. Overpoliticization prevented these forces from implementing best practices in the nineteenth century, unfortunately, but fortunately anticorruption measures and management reforms followed in the Progressive Era. Community policing and other innovations arrived in the 1960s and through the 1980s.[27]

This simplistic narrative leaves us with few analytic tools to challenge the idea of police. Even people who decry police abuses rarely interrogate the idea of police itself, allowing the image of the blue-clad officer of the peace to serve as definitional end point. A "common sense" prevails in the way Gramsci understood it, producing a deep fog.[28] "When people are called upon to explain on what terms and to what ends the police service

is furnished they are unable to go beyond the most superficial and misleading commonplace."[29]

Perhaps this explains why such enthusiasm met Foucault's invitation to treat "police" as a verb and to analyze the ways in which policing suffuses the flesh of the collective, with many people taking on parts of the task of enforcing social norms. While astute in its understanding of the process of building hegemony, that kind of thinking turns away from the actual police. It proffers a slippery slope in which everyone along the famous "disciplinary continuum," on out to the local kindergarten teacher, would be included. This dilemma of definition casts the would-be student of police back and forth between unhelpful extremes: between the most limited definition of uniformed public police and the most expansive Foucauldian one, between the most restricted conceptualization of police work as crime fighting and the broadest as the keeping of public order. It leaves us disputing only superficial aspects of police practice, never taking up our assumptions about what police are or what they do, foreclosing challenge to the legitimacy of the police in a democracy.

Such a challenge is daunting, for the myths that legitimize police in a democracy are myriad. There are those that rely on a dichotomy between good and bad police (police are independent of the market except when corrupt, police are benign when behaving themselves), and others that back the populace into postures of grateful deference (police are public servants; their work is terribly dangerous). These self-evident alibis for superficial reform are fairly easily dismissed. The former are individualizing denials; the latter are savior fantasies. As for the nobility conferred by a willing assumption of risk, well, in the eye of the beholder, risk tends to loom. Federal occupational health statistics show police work to be relatively safe, nowhere near the top three fatality-prone occupations: agriculture, transportation, and mining. Police aren't even the occupation most at risk of violent death. That honor falls to "first-line supervisors of retail sales workers."[30]

Other myths, more potent because more complex, revolve around concepts of safety or security (police keep us "safe" or are anchors of public "security"), or take the concepts of legality and its inverse, criminality, as transparent (police uphold the law, police fight crime). Refuting these, activists challenge people to explore "what really makes you feel safe?" and political theorists deconstruct the notion of "security."[31] Criminologists point out that law and crime are deeply contingent, reflecting the biases of the time and the need to maintain social control, and challenge the unthinking equation

of "harm" and "crime" by pointing out the intense harm done by actions never designated "crime" such as war, pollution, or systemic medical neglect.[32] These dual challenges render "crime" conceptually incoherent. It certainly survives as a category of experience for participants or police, but critical thinkers cannot maintain it as a category of analysis.

Crime is probably the most important myth legitimizing the police, so it is worth noting that even as a category of experience, police actually spend quite a small amount of their time dealing with what they call crime. As researchers and practitioners alike acknowledge, crime-related tasks are a tiny portion of a police officer's daily labor. "One of the earliest findings of sociological research on policing, replicated time and time again over the last fifty years, is that—contrary to popular images—most police work does not involve crime or at any rate law enforcement."[33] Instead "the overwhelming majority of calls for police assistance are service rather than crime related."[34] There is a mass of research showing that

> criminal law enforcement is something that most police officers do with the frequency located somewhere between virtually never and very rarely. . . . That less than a third of time spent on duty is on crime-related work; that approximately eight out of ten incidents handled by patrols by a range of different police departments are regarded by the police themselves as non-criminal matters; that the percentage of police effort devoted to traditional criminal law matters probably does not exceed 10 per cent; that as little as 6 per cent of a patrol officer's time is spent on incidents finally defined as "criminal."[35]

The things police do that do not have to do with "crime" could—and should—be done by other bodies: social workers, EMTs, fire fighters, traffic directors, garbage collectors, counselors, neighborhood associations, friends, and so on. That, not so incidentally, is the core of a practical, stepwise process of police abolition: begin to give to nonviolent agencies, piece by piece, the tasks currently allocated to men and women in blue.

Many people understand that police do lots of things that seem beyond their core role. These days it's not uncommon to hear people complain that police have taken on too much; they have assumed tasks that were never imagined as their purview.[36] It is certainly true that the United States in the last forty years has defunded every conceivable social program from health care to education to housing and shunted the money into the dismal nonsolution of the criminal justice system.[37] Yet to say that *anything* falls

outside police purview is to get policing wrong in principle. The reason police do so much extraneous *stuff* is that police power is fundamentally malleable, open in both theory and practice. This is strikingly evident in the juridical traditions of law and political philosophy, where the police power is formulated as an empty vessel.

As a juridical principle, the police power is a vast blank, organized by historical-cultural norms, structured by institutional forms, and made more plastic by a great degree of individual officer discretion. The elaboration of the legal concept of the police power dates back to the Greeks in a lengthy political-philosophical thread. It is focused not on crime—it could not be, as the notion that the state should be responsible for crime developed no earlier than the late nineteenth century—but on abstractions: order, or the "public good," a "most expansive, and most amorphous" power.[38] Contrasting it with law, Walter Benjamin notes, "a consideration of the police institution encounters nothing essential at all. Its power is formless, like its nowhere-tangible, all-pervasive, ghostly presence in the life of civilized states."[39] Giorgio Agamben puts it this way: "In the juridical theory, the police is a kind of black hole."[40] Reflecting on a series of early theorists, Michel Foucault conveys their sense that police jurisdiction is essentially infinite. "The police includes everything," he observes. "'The police's true object is man.'"[41] Contemporary theorists agree. The police's responsibility for order gave it "an incredibly broad compass," "both inevitable and limitless"; "by its very nature, incapable of exact definition or limitation."[42] *Police* (in the singular, as in the legal principle) "is not disposed to definition . . ."; it is the remainder, "everything else," laid out in interminable lists that can never be exhaustive.[43] The absence of either generalizable definitions or limits means that the police power is "unstable across time."[44] It can be anything, and so is whatever its age requires.

In the United States, founding conceptions of the police power drew heavily from Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1769), a text very much in the juridical tradition of wide leeway granted to police. Blackstone understood the police power broadly, judging it impossible to give a comprehensive list of the "very miscellaneous" and numerous offenses belonging under its wing. The United States assigned these powers to the fifty states, enshrining the principle of federalism in law, though not, as we shall see, in practice.[45]

Responses to charges of police brutality that defend the police on the grounds that their activities have expanded to include issues too far beyond

their proper jurisdiction, then, are true only in a radical sense, for in juridical tradition, nothing lies outside that essentially limitless scope. Policing can be as much of a swollen behemoth as we let it be.

What, then, is the core of police power? Is there some essence of police work that could not be taken on by other agents? If "crime" doesn't hold up as a category of analysis, what does constitute its inalienable core? One answer, I think, lies in a classic formulation from field-defining police scholar Egon Bittner, who observed in 1970 that it is the potential use of force that constitutes the quotidian power of policing, the actual application of which is in most cases unnecessary.[46] That is the distinction between work that must be done by police and work that police could pass on to others: work that relies upon violence or the threat thereof. Violence work.

VIOLENCE WORK

The violence meted out by police is sometimes hard to see, and many people understand it as exceptional. They think police use violence only in extreme cases or when cops go bad, as in the wrongful use of force. That point of view misses the *potential* violence that is the essence of their power. Yes, the violence of the police is often latent or withheld, but it is functional precisely because it is suspended. It often need not be made manifest, because people fear it and grant it legitimacy, in direct extension of the legitimacy they grant to state violence, broadly—and indeed, granting legitimacy to police is one of the most important ways people legitimize the state itself.

Police legitimacy fortifies and rests upon state legitimacy because the two are rough expressions of each other. *Police* and *state* are differentiated by degree: police are the human-scale expression of the state. Scholars of politics and police have phrased this relation in compelling ways. Adam Smith understood police as "the science of government in a broad sense."[47] Agamben pulls out the tautology marvelously: "Police is the relationship of a state with itself."[48] Other thinkers offer helpful images: "Every police agent embodies a minute replica of the state . . . the police are the state's most condensed governing organ."[49] State and state capacity are "phenomena of *police*"; "discourses of governance . . . are quintessentially discourses of police."[50] "As a core component of the state's monopoly on the legitimate means of coercion, police practices epitomize sovereignty in action"; or,

simply, regardless of some exceptional status we might like to delineate with the notion of "corruption," police are "fundamentally political."[51]

This is the reason the police power varies so widely: because it carries out the functions of governance. *Police* does what the state (and market—but hold off on that relation for a moment) needs to do, and that is potentially infinite. In some of the US Supreme Court's more conservative traditions (crucially the dissent in *Lochner v. New York*, 1905, now the prevailing consensus), the court essentially decided that any action identified as a police action is inherently legitimate. As Marcus Dirk Dubber explains, Lochner concluded that "*all* governmental power was police power. And it made no more sense to explore in case after case just where the limits of that power were to be drawn. For the power to police was in fact unlimited. To identify a state action as an exercise of the police power was to affirm its constitutionality. That was all there was to it."[52] The power to govern *is* the police power; the police refract the power of the state.

Violence is fundamental to police, then, because it also lies at the heart of the state. Max Weber's famous dictum regarding the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force identifies violence as the defining quality of the state. Violence is also the core of pre-Weberian, Marxist, and Foucauldian as well as other poststructuralist conceptualizations of the state, absent only in some liberal accounts. Charles Tilly notes that political theorists since Machiavelli and Hobbes have "recognized that, whatever else they do, governments organize and, wherever possible, monopolize violence." By any measure, "governments stand out from other organisations by their tendency to monopolize the concentrated means of violence," whether legitimate or illegitimate.[53] Althusser recognized that the power of state violence is *constitutive*, the fuel that makes the state machine-apparatus run.[54] Ruthie Gilmore articulates the process through which violence becomes power: "The application of *violence*—the cause of premature deaths—*produces* political power in a vicious cycle."[55] The police actualize this essence of state power, as Egon Bittner recognized with his classic definition of the police as "a mechanism for the distribution of situationally justified force in society," invoking the Weberian definition and locating the police at its crux.[56]

Police realize—they *make real*—the core of the power of the state. That is what I mean to convey by calling police "violence workers." It is not intended to indict police officers as bad people, vicious in personality or in their daily routines. It is simply about what their labor rests upon and therefore conveys into the material world. This is a slightly different use of the term

than that intended by its coiners, Martha Huggins, Mika Haritos-Fatouros, and Philip Zimbardo.[57] They use it to indicate either "direct perpetrators" or "atrocity facilitators," proximate to the application of state brutality. In grateful debt to Huggins and her coauthors, I borrow the term, crossing it with the insights of scholars of sex work who prefer that term to "prostitution" to correct the denial of the activity *as labor*. It takes work to represent and distribute state violence.

One necessarily confusing aspect of such a usage is the ambiguity of the very idea of "violence." Violence exists in a great continuum from the most immediate *thunk* of an impact to the most attenuated inflictions of discursive, epistemic, symbolic, psychic, and economic injury, as a great many theorists have pondered.[58] What kind of violence is it that is inflicted by violence workers? Certainly some of it is exacted neither by gun nor nightstick but by the absence of nutritious food to eat or conditions of labor that destroy the body. Some theorists call this "structural" violence, a concept useful in calling attention to the consequences of injustice and to seeing violence as constitutive of power, rather than inflicted and *then* judged legitimate or not depending on its agent, as a static reading of Weber might suggest.[59] The problem with this concept is that structural violence can suggest an amorphous problem, unconnected to historical institutions, too intractable to combat. This sort of violence comes to function in specific institutions with histories and futures, and it has real people behind it. To exercise its power requires work—again, violence work.

The gamut of violence is best grasped expansively, as Ruthie Gilmore does in her incisive designation, "the cause of premature deaths."[60] This capacious definition includes all the forms of violence beyond physical coercive force inasmuch as they constrict and immiserate, leading people to an early grave. It corresponds beautifully with Gilmore's well-known definition of racism, "the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death," and indeed, racism is the highly logical framework in which to understand the toil of violence workers, as we will discuss shortly.[61] In the most expansive reading of this definition, a wide range of people might be engaged in violence work, down to that legendary local kindergarten teacher. Mostly, I narrow my focus in this book to people whose labors are enabled by the fact that at some point they are entitled to bring out the handcuffs. Yet this potential openness remains, as in the scientists and other academics engaged in weapons development and related tasks whom we meet in chapter 5.

Even if we limit the discussion to the narrowest subset, people whose work is undergirded by the premise and the promise of violence, police are far from the only ones inhabiting the category. The term requires us to broaden our vision to include the great range of workers whose activity depends upon the threat or potential for violence, because their authority relies on that threat. Indeed, the term "violence work" is useful precisely because it requires this broadening. There are quite a few other sorts of work that it designates, including that done by people in any branch of the military, prisons or detention centers, high-level agencies such as marshals or customs officials, private security companies or corporate security forces, and perhaps even civilians whose violence is yoked to state purpose in gated communities, poor neighborhoods, or prisons.[62]

The essence of police work extends, therefore, beyond the patrol or the service call and far beyond the uniformed, public police to the much larger category of people who do violence work. People authorized to inflict violence might be ratified by a nonstate agent such as a private company, or be part of a mob enjoying effective social sanction, as with the KKK or other lynch mobs. Either way, such people are also channels for violence condoned by the state.[63]

"Violence workers" is a more disturbing term than euphemisms such as "law enforcement" or "security workers," and we should be disturbed. It is more accurately broad than the misleadingly governmental "police." It effectively conveys the full panoply of people whose work rests on a promise of violence, thereby displacing some of the weight of the assumption that policing is only or even primarily a state project or that the state is a watertight container or boundary for "the police," or even that police in the United States operate solely in US territory. "Violence workers" highlights the enormous range of activities such people do and the wide parameters of the ambits within which they do them.

"Violence workers" as a term therefore points to the paradox of the relationship between police and police work. Police both overflow and fail to fill their container. Police do things that do not need to be violence work—so much more—and violence work is done by more people than the uniformed public police—so very many more. How can this be, if police are expressing the essence of state power? How can people employed by private-sector entities, for example, be expressing the violence of the state?

This paradox is profoundly productive. Truly, "the history of police is the history of state power"; "all roads lead to the state in the concept

of police"; police are "an appropriate mirror to reach the state's heart."[64] A shadow more tangible than its source, an expression in flesh and blood of a concept impossible to pin down, policing shows us something much more abstract and harder to see: the nature of the state. Our opening paradox—that violence work is performed by more than police and that much work performed by police doesn't have to be violence work—is itself a reflection of the state's nonconfinement to its supposed borders.

All objects are defined by borders. We figure out what a thing is in good part by noting what it is not. We place ourselves in relation to others, and things in relation to the rest of the world of things. *Police* and *state* are no different.

What are those boundaries? This book is devoted to discerning them, by following people who work to shore them up rhetorically and institutionally. In the chapters that follow, I tell a story of violence workers crossing the conceptual borders of police. The tale is a particular historical one, pursued in order to make a broader point about the myths that legitimate state violence. It involves a small group of unusual police who are introduced in the first chapter. They worked for a State Department agency, the Office of Public Safety, which ended abruptly, allowing us to trail them during the agency's tenure and after its termination as they switched back and forth between military and civilian spheres, left government employ for the private security industry or vice-versa, and promiscuously leapt borders of nations and of scale in a sort of a high-stakes shell game.

Violence Work draws from a recent chapter in the history of the US police to show police constantly and frequently crossing the borders supposed to contain them. It shows that these borders are myths—claims that present as natural but are actually deeply ideological, as Roland Barthes instructed.[65] For police regularly cross whatever lines we think separate civilian from military spheres, doggedly protect private interests or work for market employers, travel abroad, and operate at all levels of government up to the federal scale. Police legitimacy rests on a tripartite fiction. You could even say it rests on a lie.

In other words, a trio of mythic ideas characterizes a general understanding of police. First myth: police are civilian, not military. Second: they are public, not private, that is, state rather than market agents. Third: they are local; they don't work for government bodies any higher than municipal or state levels in scale, and they certainly don't leave US national territory.

Two of these myths are carefully tended: one, the notion that police are civilian, and two, that they are public. These borders are prescriptive and normative; people believe that police *should be* public and civilian. Charges of police militarization or privatization can be serious political challenges. Notably, such challenges recognize that in many cases they actually *are* private and/or military, but they see this merely as an aberration, albeit a dangerous one. Less controversial is the myth about police geography (small scale and domestic location), often taken for granted, as in the virtually unquestioned notion that police are fundamentally local.[66] When they do travel, they ruffle few feathers (it doesn't tend to register in mass media or other arenas of public concern), but nor do they trouble the notion of policing's minor scale and geographic ambit. These three borders, together, comprise the idea of police as legitimate wielders of power. Police authority is justified when these three borders are assumed to hold, and allowed to function invisibly.

These borders are conceptual, not absolute. As the chapters of this book narrate, police actually cross them regularly in practice, denying those crossings vehemently in all sorts of ways. The borders of policing are like national borders, which, as the field of border studies has so beautifully affirmed, still exert tremendous force even as all sorts of crossings and mixtures show them to be far more fluid than traditional political definitions assume. To look squarely at our ideas about the borders of policing can reveal how the popular notion of police achieves coherence and legitimacy—and lends the same to the idea of the state—by contrasting itself to concepts defined as outside it.

Following these crossings requires us to rethink much of what we assume about police, and since police are the translation of state violence into human form, to rethink a great deal of what we assume about the state as well. Tracking police back to the source of their power illuminates that power's disregard of borders that don't contain it either—even as it starkly contains the people who live or would live in its land with much more concrete kinds of borders. For the state, too, is discursively bounded by this same trio of distinctions: public/private, military/civilian, and territoriality at the national scale.[67] A democratic state is separate from the market, or so the story goes; it uses military action only beyond its borders, treating its citizens to gentler civilian strictures; and it acts independently from other states and primarily within its own territory and in relation to its populace so that the sovereign corresponds to a bounded imagined community—a nation-state in which there is coherence between state and nation.

As with the borders of the idea of police, the state is constrained by these borders only conceptually. The fiction of territoriality is belied by the foreign operation of state agents in collaborative arrangements of multiple states and market bodies intermixed so deeply that no national affiliation can be discerned. Such entities abound; some of them are the characters of this book. They are, for example, the members and then former members of the Office of Public Safety, a US federal agency established during the early Cold War to help professionalize allied nations' police. The Office of Public Safety was a State Department unit in operation from 1962 to 1974. Its goal was to spread modern police tactics so as to preserve order for democratic politics and economic progress. Trainers for the Office of Public Safety crossed US borders and transcended "normal" police scale by working for a federal body rather than a municipal or state police force. Chapter 1 introduces this odd agency that lifted US police up several rungs of scale and sent them over national borders to train foreign police. Placing its founding, operation, and demise in global and national contexts, the chapter narrates how the transnational currents of the Cold War sparked and shaped foreign police assistance and then brought it home, changing US policing significantly.

Another body mixing multiple market and state players was the security force organized in the mid-1970s by the oil giant Aramco to stand guard at its trade talks worldwide. That force included former US police officers, was headed by a former FBI agent, and trained at the expense of the Saudi government at the US International Police Academy (IPA), the school launched and run for twelve years by the Office of Public Safety (OPS), which had advised the Saudi government to form such a body. We meet this group of violence workers, which conjoined two governments at multiple scales and the massive corporate oil industry, in chapter 4. In another illustrative example, when local police in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia who had worked for the Office of Public Safety came to the United States after 1975 as refugees, they were warmly welcomed by former OPS. The two groups of ex-cops often identified more closely with each other than with their fellow citizens, and expressed strong patriotism alongside a sense of having been wronged by their state(s). Their patterns of nationalism and state affiliation confound notions of the proper alignment of those categories, as chapter 6 describes.

We follow OPS, furthermore, to see the state cross military-civilian borders through the activities of its violence workers, most directly in chapter 2.

OPS was founded when global conditions forced the United States to shift its foreign policy tactics from military to police actions in the name of civilian and humanitarian aid. The change was incomplete, for the priority was to counter insurgency, not to fight crime. OPS grew and operated in military realms, creating thoroughly mixed-sphere tactics, strategies, and goals. An intense effort was expended to present it, nonetheless, as civilian, revealing the stakes of appearing to cross this Rubicon.

The third border, that between state and market, is also on display in the OPS story. In chapter 3, we follow former OPS employees to Alaska where they animated a thoroughly miscegenated oil security apparatus, including state troopers, municipal cops, prison employees, and private businesses' security personnel; US federal government, state, and municipal bodies; and foreign national powers. In chapter 5, the fiction of state/market distinction is on display in the work of universities and think tanks that joined the explosion of police education, to which ex-OPS contributed generously. Institutes and centers deftly switched their ostensible public or private status to evade public criticism or benefit from federal largesse and private philanthropy.

If at one point all the human characters in this book worked for a minor federal agency, in other parts of their lives they served as municipal police and state troopers, or were employed by the federal government in both civilian and military posts, or were paid by private corporations in the fields then coming to be called "security." Some of these violence workers sometimes fit the category of police; other times they did not, and so they and their allies deployed discursive limits to the notion of policing to admit or exclude them, tracing for viewers in retrospect the boundaries of the concept of policing—and the police-anchored boundaries that project the state's constituent outsides—in the United States during a central decade of the Cold War.

Following OPS suggests that the crossing of one of these police/state borders invites the crossing of another. As the crossings accumulate and overlap, spaces dazzlingly hybrid in composition proliferate. These objects are well described by the Deleuzian concept of "assemblage," which admits any number of constitutive pieces, all of different character and scale.[68] "Assemblage" aptly describes the actual formations in which violence workers ply their trades, such as the hybrid security company Wackenhut, ostensibly private but built on government contracts at federal and state scales and nourished, as we will see in chapter 3, by the security needs of the Alaska

oil pipeline, itself a product of transnational government and private-sector pieces. Political discourse is clarified through the concept of assemblage, which permits the juxtaposition of elements unlike in nature, scale, and degree of magnitude. The infamous rallying cry for "law and order," for example, integrated transnational, global-scale "tough on communism" fears and tactics. As chapter 1 narrates, the United States' imperial engagements abroad are a part of the language and logic of this notorious, prison-feeding, discursive-legislative assemblage. An equally critical element is the denial of mixture, as violence workers and their champions proclaim and perform the sanctity of each of these borders in plays for the deniability of the nature of their work. In those labors of border defense, laden with strategic misdirection, lie clues to the deadly "magic of the state."[69]

The border between public and private spheres, that is, the myth of the autonomy of state and market, is particularly vehemently defended, for it is the cornerstone of liberal capitalism, and all the more so of neoliberal capitalism. Classical liberal economists such as Adam Smith imagined public and private as cleanly distinct. Smith posited *homo economicus* as age-old and markets as naturally evolving long before states sprung up within them. Historian Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (1944) disputed this speculation. Markets need states, Polanyi showed; never has there been an independently operating, truly self-regulating market. Market economies grew not naturally but due to "highly artificial stimulants administered to the body social" and would destroy themselves and society if left to their own devices.[70] In the 1970s, political economist Nicos Poulantzas extended this line of thinking, roundly rejecting the notion that the political could be autonomous from the economic. Even more emphatically than Polanyi, he called the relation "inherent and theoretically unbreakable."[71] Poulantzas did not see the state as symptom (epiphenomenon) of the more "real" economic realm even as he maintained the core of the Marxist insight that the state serves the interests of capital.[72]

The notion that state and market are distinct, Marxist scholars recognize, is "an illusion, a trick, to fool the powerless into thinking that the state is neutral and above and beyond such sordid transactions."[73] In the second half of the twentieth century, such scholars developed this thread, asking, "Does the state exist?" relentlessly.[74] An influential contribution was Philip Abrams's argument in 1977 that the state was a social fiction, an implication, reified in practice. He called on historical sociologists to distinguish

between a state-system and a state-idea, and to demystify the state by "attending to the senses in which the state does not exist rather than to those in which it does."[75]

Foucauldian-influenced thinkers have taken up the challenge of theorizing an abstraction with great sophistication. Departing from the agreement that the state is "not a thing," Wendy Brown describes an "unbounded terrain of powers and techniques, an ensemble of discourses, rules, and practices." Although Gilmore and Gilmore see it more concretely as a "territorially bounded set of relatively specialized institutions," they ultimately also posit its openness as a set of "ideological and institutional capacities," consonant with James Ferguson's subtle articulation, "the name of a way of tying together, multiplying, and coordinating power relations, a kind of knotting or congealing of power."[76]

Among the most unremittingly thoughtful of the Foucauldians is Timothy Mitchell, who has offered marvelous ways to think *around* the "imaginary coherence" of the state. Recognizing that what we call "'the state' arises from techniques that enable mundane material practices to take on the appearance of an abstract, nonmaterial form," Mitchell proposes that scholars seek to historicize the production of "state effects." Indeed, he insists, there are no states, only these "state effects."[77]

The state-effect has a function, Mitchell expands: it limits claims for equality and justice by carving up discursive and material space. It does so, he writes, "by acknowledging certain areas as matters of public concern subject to popular decision while establishing other fields to be administered under alternative methods of control. For example, governmental practice can demarcate a private sphere governed by rules of property, a natural world governed by laws of nature, or markets governed by principles of economics. Democratic struggles become a battle over the distribution of issues."[78] Note that this is essentially Poulantzas's understanding of the way capitalism projects an arena of the political into which no market activities are supposed to intrude.

Mitchell suggests that the mid-twentieth century saw an expansion of the supposed laws of "the market" as an "alternative technology of rule," effectively excluding more of the world from democratic contestation.[79] One name for this expansion is neoliberalism, the economic philosophy emergent since the 1970s that posits the separability of political from economic realms, and coaches its followers to assume *and desire* a radical autonomy of state from market. The paladins of neoliberalism prefer the freedom of

capital and of corporations to that of the nearly eight million people in the United States now under some form of correctional control.[80]

The rise of mass incarceration under neoliberalism is no coincidence. A critical aspect of the market as "alternative technology of rule" is race, that central engine of postwar prison expansion. Race is a crucial technic for neoliberalism's exclusions, operating as it does to separate, define, and control populations—as Foucault put it, to "fragment[] the field of the biological that power controls."[81] In inextricable relation, the idea of the state operates to fragment a related field, producing the distinctions between the state and its others that Mitchell tags as a critical aspect of the exercise of power.[82]

Violence Work embraces Mitchell's charge to take seriously the elusive boundary between the state and its constitutive others. It works to reveal some of the internal boundaries—particularly those secured by ideas about the way police do their work—that feed the umbrella category "the state" in relation to the market, for in that nexus lie the most important aspects of modern power. There lie, as Abrams might say, the "actualities of social subordination."[83] To get at that intimacy, I use the simple term "state-market," as both adjective (as in "state-market power" or "state-market violence") and noun. Because the state is nonetheless a category that has purchase as an idea, I still also use "state" by itself, when talking about the state-idea that denies a connection to the market, for example, or the state-effect that people experience, or when exploring other theorists' consideration of the state. If this wavering of terms is confusing, all the better to underscore the elusive, ever-receding nature of the idea of the state.

The compound term "state-market" helps focus the structuring matrix capitalism provides for the state, and vice-versa. I mean to point out that the relationship is something of chicken and egg. As Poulantzas understood, neither came first: the state was "capitalist from the start, and not . . . an institution inserted into 'capitalist society.'"[84] Gilmore and Gilmore start from the other end, pointing out that capitalism had the state from the start: "There has never been a minute in the history of capitalism lacking the organized, centralized, and reproducible capacities of the state."[85] While the socialist and communist regimes in modern history dreamed of autonomy, they too worked to distinguish the state rhetorically from the realm of the market and thereby engaged in the dynamic under critique here. They could have done no less, moreover, operating within and subsiding back into the overarching framework of global capitalism as they did. In an

important sense, the capitalist state is the only state we've known, though maybe not the only one we can imagine.

Just as old or older, just as inescapably essential, and thoroughly interwoven in this history is the idea of race. Race has been fundamental to capitalism from the first, scholars of this history have shown, exploring "the racial roots of capitalism," noting the way capitalism, from its emergence, made race "its epistemology, its ordering principle, its organizing structure, its moral authority, its economy of justice, commerce, and power."[86] The concept of "racial capitalism," redundant but helpful, points us to this inextricability. Robin Kelley expands:

> [Capitalism] emerged within the feudal order and flowered in the cultural soil of a Western civilization already thoroughly infused with racialism. Capitalism and racism, in other words, did not break from the old order but rather evolved from it to produce a modern world system of "racial capitalism" dependent on slavery, violence, imperialism, and genocide. Capitalism was "racial" not because of some conspiracy to divide workers or justify slavery and dispossession, but because racialism had already permeated Western feudal society. The first European proletarians were racial subjects (Irish, Jews, Roma or Gypsies, Slavs, etc.) and they were victims of dispossession (enclosure), colonialism, and slavery within Europe.[87]

Capitalism, Chris Chen points out, has always required "the systematic racialisation of [unfree] labour through the creation of an array of effectively nonsovereign raced and gendered subjects." *Race* is both a necessary engine and a product of capitalism: "'Race' is not extrinsic to capitalism or simply the product of specific historical formations such as South African Apartheid or Jim Crow America. Likewise, capitalism does not simply incorporate racial domination as an incidental part of its operations, but from its origins systematically begins producing and reproducing 'race' as global surplus humanity."[88]

Given racial capitalism's roots in feudalism, it is no wonder that even older notions of the state, such as that which arose in Renaissance Europe, tightly tied to the person of the prince, are racialized in concept.[89] Meanwhile the modern version was born in and of the dynamics of colonialism and differentiation of the human from affectable others described by Denise Ferreira da Silva, Sylvia Wynter, Nikhil Singh, and others.[90]

This is a necessary starting point in thinking about police in relation to the state. Many people agree that race is relevant to the activities of police, but they see this relevance as incidental or correctible through police sensitivity training or better regulation. The link is deeper and different. Police function to produce race, a category essential to the workings of the state-market under racial capitalism. Any analysis of US policing must consider its constitutive relationship to the racialization of Black and brown subjects, not only theoretically but also in history, with the US police's structural formation as an antiblack force.[91] In the United States, Saidiya Hartman has written, the police power as laid out by the Supreme Court is "little more than the benevolent articulation of state racism in the name of the public good."[92] This is an essential undergirding to discussions that may not always explicitly address race. For whoever says "state," "police," and "violence" in discussing the last three hundred years, says "race."[93]

One of the ultimate implications of this line of argument is an indictment of the state form. At the very least, it leaves us with little reason to invest hope in the state form under capitalism. Further, embracing the concept of assemblage to understand state power entails a distinct loss of coherence, since an object with the properties of assemblage is existentially untenable. This will appeal to people who lean toward skepticism in relation to the state, from prison abolitionists to anarchists of varying stripes. It will resonate with the notice in anthropology of groups who live together ably without states, and indeed, understand *state* as the source of violence rather than its solution.[94] This thoroughgoing critique of the state will be difficult, however, for many readers to swallow.

The urgency of the problem of state-market violence makes it incumbent to wonder why the ultimate implications of this argument are so difficult to accept—even for people who will accompany most of the steps. The affective investment in the idea of the state, and the corresponding investment in the notion that a human-scale branch of state power could live up to its ideals and genuinely "keep us safe," go very deep. While I do think that many people misunderstand the nature of police, policing, and the state, it is not the kind of misunderstanding that can be corrected with information. This isn't an ignorance that knowledge can simply displace. No clear-cut misunderstanding underlies the inability to follow the trail of violence work but a barrier beyond argument, nestled in the realm of dreams. The idea of a

benign protector, the state, looking after us all via its proxy, police, is devastatingly seductive.

To begin to dismantle this investment, the structures of privilege and marginalization that make some people desire state violence will have to be dislodged. State violence that might hurt others more than oneself (or seems as though it might) is actually a reasonable choice for subjects formed in the crucible of the carceral state, even if it consigns their lives to misery as well.[95] This is true not only for the apocryphal white Trump voter, but for people of color who are regularly recruited to the defense of racial capitalism, given a system of rights and law in which "recuperating social value *requires* rejecting the other Other."[96] We must work to realign desire for Big Brother given that racialized populations are rendered criminal, terrorist, or alien as an *effect* of the operation of law.[97] Appeals to the state cannot save us from the state.

What could alter the investment in the notions of police and state, then, is that age-old bottom line: the redistribution of resources with equity in mind.[98] Not, this time, by the state-market. The best attempts of the energetic and capable activists in the state-focused movements of the 1930s to the 1960s have been countered, in the last fifty years, with a process of redistribution *up*, robbing from the poor to give to the rich. Violence work was key in this, as rising inequality was both facilitated and answered by expanded violence. As this book's conclusion will take up again, after the chapters have had a chance to tell their story, the explosion of prisons and policing in the United States—the carceral boom—is both product and engine of the state-market refusal to share the mid-century's wealth through just distribution of resources.[99] Getting people to accept this divisive, destructive, brutally constrictive situation was hard work. Yet again: violence work.

The concept of violence work is "good for thinking" for scholar-activists, in ways this book does not exhaust. It allows us to traverse police history to revisit the workings of power, focusing the forms the state-market wields to shield the fragments of its assemblage from scrutiny and challenge. The state cannot serve as focus directly; it is too big, too amorphous, too ghostly—there really is no there, there, after all. One can only approach the concept glancingly. *Violence Work* asks "police" to provide that guiding role.

Thus guided, we will see aspects of our world that are otherwise buried under the weight of assumption about public safety, the state, the private sector, citizen and stranger, place and scale. Lifting that weight, we contextualize police in the ideological landscape that contains and legitimates

state-market violence. We interrupt the arguments that contain public criticism of the police at home and of the US military in its wars abroad, and that recirculate tragic conceptions of the varying value of human lives.

Violence Work's idiosyncratic angle of approach to understanding police identifies the projected boundaries of the state idea and tells stories of people transgressing them in practice while reinforcing them in discursive realms. This process built both pieces of the state-market's "legitimate violence"—the legitimacy *and* the violence—turning the global helm toward the ruinous lethality of the late Cold War.

NOTES

Epigraph: Reiner, *Politics of the Police*, xiii.

INTRODUCTION

1 This phrasing relies on Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28.
2 Feagin and Hahn, *Ghetto Revolts*; Murakawa, *First Civil Right*, 72; J. T. Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis*, 12.
3 Takagi, "Garrison State."
4 Committee Against Police Abuse pamphlet, 1975, Box 1, Folder 12, "Police Brutality, 1975–1994," Frank I. Sanchez collection, # MSS612BC, Center for Southwest Research Activist manuscript collections, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.
5 Skolnick and Fyfe, *Above the Law*, 77.
6 NOBLE, "NOBLE: An Overview," 3.
7 Hinds, "Police Use of Force"; E. J. Escobar, "Bloody Christmas"; M. S. Johnson, *Street Justice*; C. Agee, *Streets of San Francisco*; Kelley, "Thug Nation"; Murakawa, *First Civil Right*; Maguire and King, "Trends in the Policing Industry"; Uchida, "Development of the American Police."
8 Harring et al., "Management of Police Killings."
9 Platt, "Obama's Task Force on Policing."
10 Takagi, "LEAA's Research Solicitation," 58; Platt, "Obama's Task Force on Policing."
11 Walker, "Between Two Worlds," 24; Brown, *Working the Street*.
12 C. Agee, *Streets of San Francisco*; Balko, *Overkill*, 11; Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *Iron Fist*; Gilmore and Gilmore, "Beyond Bratton," 182–83; Greene and Mastrofski, *Community Policing*; Hansford, "Community Policing Reconsidered"; Harcourt, *Illusion of Order*, 46–47; Herbert, *Citizens, Cops, and Power*; Mitchell, Attoh, and Staeheli, "Broken Windows"; Moraff, "Community Policing"; Skogan, "Community's Role in Community Policing."
13 Wilkerson, "Emmet Till and Tamir Rice"; J. Feldman, "Roland Fryer Is Wrong"; LaCapria, "Harvard Study"; Balko, "Why It's Impossible"; Drucker, *Plague of Prisons*; Harris and Curtis, *Millennium Breach*. See also the discussion of police lethality in this book's conclusion.

14 Cohen, "Punitive City"; two excellent analyses of the process of turning good countercarceral intentions into net-widening policies are Schept, *Progressive Punishment*, and Story, "Prison in the City."

15 Camp and Heatherton, "We Charge Genocide"; "Chicago BLM Activist"; Gilmore and Gilmore, "Beyond Bratton"; Hasson, "Black Lives Matter Attorney"; Herzing, "Big Dreams and Bold Steps"; Kaba, "Summer Heat"; Martin, "Policing Is a Dirty Job"; M. D. Smith, "In Order to End Police."

16 Wagner, *Disturbing the Police*, 48.

17 Banton, *Policeman in the Community*; E. J. Watts, "Police in Atlanta"; E. J. Watts, "Police Priorities"; Rubenstein, *City Police*; Carte and Carte, *Police Reform*; Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *Iron Fist*; Walker, *Critical History*; Fogelson, *Big-City Police*; Miller, *Cops and Bobbies*; Richardson, *New York Police*; Monkkonen, *Police in Urban America*; D. Johnson, *American Law Enforcement*; Harring, *Policing a Class Society*. In Britain the models are even older: as late as 1991, a collection of historical essays on colonial policing in the British empire could still organize itself in relation to a classic published in 1952; see Anderson and Killingray, *Policing the Empire*.

18 Dulaney, *Black Police in America*; Appier, *Policing Women*; E. J. Escobar, *Race, Police*; E. J. Escobar, "Bloody Christmas"; Burt, "Tony Rios and Bloody Christmas"; Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon*; Bolton Jr. and Feagin, *Black in Blue*; Wolcott, *Cops and Kids*; Kitaeff, *Jews in Blue*; Moore, *Black Rage in New Orleans*.

19 Canaday, *Straight State*, 5; Balogh, "State of the State," 458; Sewell, *Logics of History*, 3–6; Arno Mayer, interviewed in Grandin and Joseph, *Century of Revolution*, 419, 11; see Kramer, "Power and Connection," for a marvelous discussion of historians' denial of US empire, a key part of the avoidance of the state. The history of the police I pursue in this book is a transnational, imperial history along the lines Kramer encourages.

20 Balogh, "State of the State." A well-taken exception is the school of "everyday state formation," which follows nonelites back to the state, positing state formation as a quotidian process guided by elites and nonelites in conversation. See Joseph and Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation*; Wolfe, *Everyday Nation-State*; Auyero, *Patients of the State*. The dearth of histories of the police power in the US is also due to federalism and the legal fiction of the ostensible allocation of police power to the states. This has deterred scholars (not only historians) from investigations into the police power broadly since the earliest years of the twentieth century. As Dubber puts it, "The history of the federal police power in the United States . . . has been the history of its denial." Dubber, "New Police Science," 121. See also Tomlins, "Necessities of State."

21 Shearing, "Unrecognized Origins of the New Policing," 219; Johnston, *Rebirth of Private Policing*, 117. Note that Dubber and Valverde, "Introduction," 2, praise those legal historians who have revived the subject of police, including Pasquale Pasquino, Nikolas Rose, Mitchell Dean, William Novak, and Chris Tomlins.

22 Neocleous, *Fabrication of Social Order*, ix. A similar complaint is P. K. Manning, "Theorizing Policing." These complaints come from a critical site within the social sciences, particularly a field calling itself "the new police science," which works to recover police as a "predisciplinary object of study" and mode of governance, bringing together the multiple meanings of police and critical threads of police scholarship across the silos of discipline: Neocleous, *Fabrication of Social Order* (quotations in this footnote are from this source, xiii–xiv); Neocleous, *Critique of Security*; Tilly, "War Making and State Making"; Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*; Wolfe, *Everyday Nation-State*; Tullis, "Vietnam at Home"; Dubber and Valverde, *New Police Science*, esp. Neocleous, "Theoretical Foundations" and Dubber, "New Police Science"; Dubber and Valverde, *Police and the Liberal State*; Dubber, *Police Power*. This powerful and sophisticated work understands the extensive reach of police work, contains the critique of "militarization," and is dubious of "police brutality" and the separation of police from war. *Violence Work* is in great debt to the vision elaborated in this field, and hopes to direct it toward the vernacular conception of police prevailing in the fields of history and criminal justice as well as in popular parlance, by translating that vision into a more narrative, empirical frame.

23 Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*, 38.

24 Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *Iron Fist*; Harring, *Policing a Class Society*; Harring, "Development of the Police Institution," criticizing the notion of crime as the cause in books by Roger Lane, James Richardson, and Sam Bass Warner, Jr., specifically; Reiner, *Politics of the Police*; Williams and Murphy, "Evolving Strategy of Police"; Walker, "Broken"; Strecher, "Revising the Histories"; Chambliss, "Policing the Ghetto Underclass"; Eck and Maguire, "Have Changes in Policing"; Harcourt, *Illusion of Order*; K. Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*.

25 Schrader, "American Streets, Foreign Territory"; Schrader, *Policing Revolution*; Heatherton and Camp, *Policing the Planet*, especially essays by Hansford and Vitale; Vitale, *City of Disorder*; Vitale, "Rise of Command and Control Protest Policing"; Vitale, "Policing Protests in New York City"; Vitale, "Safer Cities Initiative"; Wall, "For the Very Existence of Civilization"; Wall, "On the Secret of the Drone"; Wall, "Unmanning the Police Manhunt."

26 Berger, *Captive Nation*; Blue, *Doing Time in the Great Depression*; M. Brown, *Culture of Punishment*; Cacho, *Social Death*; Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis*; Chávez-García, *States of Delinquency*; Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*; Dayan, *Law Is a White Dog*; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; Haley, *No Mercy Here*; Hames-Garcia, *Fugitive Thought*; Hernández, *City of Inmates*; Hernandez, *Migra!*; James, *Resisting State Violence*; James, *Warfare in the American Homeland*; Kunzel, *Criminal Intimacy*; Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor*; Loyd, *Health Rights Are Civil Rights*; Loyd, Mitchelson, and Burridge, *Beyond Walls and Cages*; McArdle and Erzen, *Zero Tolerance*; Meiners, *For the Children?*; Murakawa, *First Civil Right*; Paik, *Rightlessness*; Rhodes, *Total Confinement*; Rodriguez, *Forced Passages*; Schept, *Progressive Punishment*; Schrader, *American Streets, Foreign Territory*; Sentas, *Traces of Terror*; Shabazz, *Spatializing Blackness*; Story, *Prison in Twelve*

Landscapes; Tilton, *Dangerous or Endangered?*; Vargas, *Never Meant to Survive*; Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace*; Washington, "Prisons as a Part of American Studies"; C. Woods, *Development Arrested*; Zilberg, *Space of Detention*.

27 Most zealous in support of this fable is George Kelling, source of the notorious "broken windows" theory of zero-tolerance policing (Kelling, "Broken Windows"); he recounts his version of police history in Kelling and Moore, "Evolving Strategy of Policing"; a summary of this simplistic history is Uchida, "Development of the American Police." While less yoked to the veneration of police than these works, academic histories are implicated in some of their narrative lines; see, for example, Fogelson, *Big-City Police*; Monkkonen, *Police in Urban America*; Walker, *Critical History*; G. Woods, *Police in Los Angeles*.

28 Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*; Crehan, *Gramsci's Common Sense*; Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis*, 16; Rothstein and Inouye, "Visual Games and the Unseeing of Race," 304.

29 Bittner, "Florence Nightingale."

30 Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) statistics show the highest fatality rates per 100,000 workers for agriculture, followed by transportation and mining. Most police deaths occurred in transportation accidents; BLS, "All Charts," 14, 20. See also Fleetwood, "Police Work."

31 Critical Resistance, "Common Sense"; Neocleous, *Critique of Security*; Neocleous and Rigakos, *Anti-Security*.

32 Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*; Kappeler, Blumberg, and Potter, *Mythology of Crime and Criminal Justice*; Lynch and Michalowski, "Radical Concept of Crime"; J. I. Ross, *Cutting the Edge*; Punch, *Dirty Business*, 1; C. P. Wilson, *Cop Knowledge*; Papke, *Framing the Criminal*.

33 Reiner, *Politics of the Police*, 19.

34 Spitzer and Scull, "Privatization and Capitalist Development," 24.

35 Neocleous, *Fabrication of Social Order*, 92–93, and citing, in addition to Reiner and Spitzer and Scull, Banton, *Policeman in the Community*, 2, 7, 127; Bottomley and Coleman, "Criminal Statistics"; Bittner, "Police on Skid-Row"; Bayley, "What Do the Police Do?," 31–33; Ericson, *Reproducing Order*, 5–6, 206; and Ericson and Haggerty, *Policing the Risk Society*, 19.

36 "Dallas PD Chief Suggests Change."

37 Or, as Julilly Kohler-Hausmann argues in "Guns and Butter," it has built the carceral state on the structure bequeathed by the welfare state and in accordance with its already-existing logics of blame and punishment; see also Hinton, *From the War on Poverty*.

38 Cohen, "Punitive City," 353; Dean, "Military Intervention as 'Police' Action?" 194; Dubber, *Police Power*, xi; Monkkonen, "Cop History." On police discretion, see Brown, *Working the Street*.

39 Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," 243.

40 Agamben, "From the State of Control."

41 Foucault, "Omnes et Singulatum," 248; the second quotation is Turquet de Mayenne, in 1611.

42 Neocleous, "Theoretical Foundations," 19–20; Hartman, *Scenes,* 243n17.
43 Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace,* 5–7.
44 Tomlins, "Framing the Fragments," 267.
45 Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 162, cited in Dubber, *Police Power*, xii, 49.
46 Bittner, "Capacity to Use Force."
47 L. Farmer, "Jurisprudence of Security," 146.
48 Agamben, "From the State of Control."
49 Seri, "All the People Necessary," 250.
50 Tomlins, "Necessities of State," 47, 48; emphasis in source.
51 Andreas, *Border Games*, 5; Huggins, *Political Policing*, 4; the profoundly political nature of policing is also superbly analyzed in Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*.
52 Dubber, *Police Power*, 201. Note that by "state," Dubber here means one of the fifty.
53 Tilly, "War Making and State Making," 171.
54 Datta, "Security and the Void," 223.
55 Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings," 16.
56 Bittner, "Capacity to Use Force."
57 Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo, *Violence Workers,* 1; see also Cancelli, *Histórias de Violência*; this version is closer to the concept of "violence specialists" as developed by Tilly; see Auyero, *Patients of the State*, 44–45, citing Tilly, *Politics of Collective Violence,* 35.
58 As evidenced in the extensive academic literature on violence, including Agamben, *Homo Sacer*; Biehl, "Vita"; Mbembe, "Necropolitics"; Arendt, "Reflections on Violence"; Arendt, *On Violence*; Balibar, "Violence, Ideality and Cruelty"; Benjamin, "Critique of Violence"; Das, "Act of Witnessing"; Das, *Life and Words*; Dayan, "Legal Terrors"; Derrida, "Force of Law"; A. Feldman, *Formations of Violence*; Hartman, *Scenes*; Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo, *Violence Workers*; Judy, "Provisional Note"; Lawrence and Karim, "General Introduction"; Ogilvie, "Violence et representation"; Schinkel, *Aspects of Violence*; Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*; Tilly, *Politics of Collective Violence*.
59 The classic formulation is Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research"; see also Høivik, "Demography of Structural Violence"; Loyd, "Microscopic Insurgent"; a beautiful application is P. Farmer, "Anthropology of Structural Violence."
60 Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings," 16.
61 Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28.
62 For insight on the ways private citizens are unknowingly conscripted into violence work—through the refusal to regulate gun ownership, for example, or the deliberate formation of gangs by prison officials through segregation and unfair distribution of "privileges," I thank Brackette Williams, personal communications, summer 2016; Mirpuri, "Radical Violence," adds mass shooters to this list; see also Rusche and Kirchheimer, *Punishment and Social Structure*;

White, "Concept of 'Less Eligibility'"; Buerger and Mazerolle, "Third-Party Policing"; Maguire and King, "Trends in the Policing Industry," 29.

63 I think it is misguided to admit a monopoly of legitimate violence only when official state agents commit, rather than authorize it, as Brian Wagner does in arguing that during slavery the state did not hold such a monopoly, as masters punished at their discretion (*Disturbing the Peace,* 7). I find it more compelling to think of the state as holding "singular control over who may commit violence, how, and to what end," as Gilmore and Gilmore write in "Restating the Obvious," 143–44.

64 Neocleous, *Fabrication of Social Order*, xi, 118; Seri, "All the People Necessary," 250.

65 Barthes, *Mythologies*.

66 This is evident in police expert Paul Chevigny's remark that policing is "almost totally local," offered in passing with no argumentative effort; Chevigny, "Foreword," viii.

67 The state has other limiting lines, as does "police"; one common one is civil society. The state/civil society dichotomy is a related but different framework. This is the first in a series of ways in which the terms discussed here slip among confusingly close sets of meanings, exchanging one set of border concepts for another. The next, noted in chapter 2, is that of civilian vs. sworn police; the third, in chapter 3, the use of "private sphere" to mean not the business world but the household. I note these in passing and invite others to interpret.

68 Deleuze, "Eight Years Later," 177. This is actually not so far from Poulantzas, who pointed out that the state is made up of multiple apparatuses or institutions, some of which are ideological (showing his debts to Althusser), such as the school, the church, or the family, and some of which are more nakedly repressive (police, army, and so on). The repressive ones are more unified and easier to see as such, but Poulantzas cautions that one must not neglect the others, for all are foundational to the whole; Poulantzas, "Problem of the Capitalist State," 77; see also Murakawa and Beckett, "Mapping the Shadow Carceral State." Abrams, too, emphasized the internal heterogeneity of the state in a way that is consistent with the notion of assemblage; Abrams, "Notes." Other scholars of police power have also found assemblage to be intellectually productive. Foucault speaks of "two great assemblages" in discussing police and war, "a military-diplomatic apparatus, on the one hand, and the apparatus of police . . . on the other"; Neocleous, *War Power, Police Power*, 12. See also Bachmann, Bell and Holmqvist, *War, Police, and Assemblages of Intervention*, which invites readers to consider using assemblage to explore the police-military-service bodies that fight, support, and clean up contemporary conflicts. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's *1000 Plateaus*, they define an assemblage as "a grouping of heterogeneous elements that, at some point, displays a kind of collective synergy and consistency" (Bachmann, Bell and Holmqvist, *War, Police*, 3–4). As they usefully elaborate, the grouping is ad hoc, subject to reorganization and transformation, with no central organizing power. It is not

a structure with formal, enduring totality but a network whose relations are never fully contained, and whose elements retain an independent existence. Increasingly, critical ethnic studies scholars suggest we conceive of race itself as an assemblage: Saldanha, *Psychedelic White*; Singh, "Whiteness of Police"; Puar, "I Would Rather Be a Cyborg"; Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*.

69 Taussig, *Magic of the State*.

70 Polanyi, *Great Transformation*, 60; see also Graeber, *Debt*.

71 Jenkins, "Calibrating the Capitalist State."

72 E.g., Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 37: "The executive of the modern state is nothing but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." Poulantzas suggested that the state functions as glue, "the factor of cohesion" holding a given society together and helping it reproduce its unequal relations, "the domination of one class over the others." Poulantzas, "Problem of the Capitalist State," 73; see also "Preliminaries to the Study of Hegemony in the State," *Poulantzas Reader*, 79–80.

73 Hall, "State in Question," 23.

74 Gramsci in Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*, 203–6; Jessop, *State Theory*, 339. See also Hall, "State in Question"; Jenkins, "Calibrating the Capitalist State"; Gerber, "Corporatism and State Theory." Meanwhile, a post-Marxist instrumentalism proposed a reinvigorated engagement with the people and institutions who make up the state, the better to see it as an internally complex tangle of agents and subjects; Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In*; Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In"; Calavita, *Inside the State*. Foucauldians tend to find the Skocpol-inspired literature flat, charging that it overemphasizes institutions; it is also explicitly anti-Marxist in inspiration, and unsurprisingly, Marxists see themselves caricatured in it, as Bob Jessop complains in *State Theory*. Timothy Mitchell charges attempts to "bring the state back in" with reducing the state "to a subjective system of decision making" and calls Skocpol's argument specifically a "voluntarist, ideological explanation" (Mitchell, "Limits of the State," 77, 86) and "institutionalist" (Mitchell, "Society, Economy, and the State Effect," 170). All in all scholars have demonstrated a veritable if irregular "obsession" with the state; Valverde, "Police, Sovereignty, and Law," 15. See also Skocpol, "Political Response to Capitalist Crisis." Jessop tracked a related arc of scholarly neglect of the state and then a reembrace in the 1970s; Jessop, *State Theory*, 338; so did Keller, "(Jerry-) Building a New American State," 248.

75 Abrams, "Notes." See also Trouillot, "Anthropology of the State."

76 W. Brown, *States of Injury*, 174–75; Gilmore and Gilmore, "Restating the Obvious," 143; J. Ferguson, *Anti-Politics Machine*, 273.

77 Mitchell, "Society, Economy," 169–70; Mitchell, "Limits of the State."

78 Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 9.

79 Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 11.

80 Graeber, *Debt*; Novak, "Myth of the 'Weak' American State"; Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

81 Foucault, Michel. "Society Must Be Defended," 255.

82 Mitchell adds a formidable arrow to the arsenal arrayed against neoliberalism's claims with his argument that there *was no* notion of "the economy" as a noun, not to mention a nationally bounded noun, prior to the 1930s. "The economy," he charges, placing it in scare quotes, was invented as an autonomous realm in the 1930s, as handmaid to development economics. Mitchell helps to show how the notion of "the state" (along with the other ostensibly noneconomic realm of "the household") served as the constitutive outer edge of the notion of "the economy," fixing them all to the real; Mitchell, "Fixing the Economy." The idea of the state is productive on behalf of other structures as well, such as global inequality. As Beth Baker-Cristales reasons, the idea of the state is a bulwark of the myths underlying international law, especially the notion that all states come to a global bargaining table as equals. (She also makes the wonderful point that it is odd that the state is widely believed to be old, while globalization is seen as new, since the two emerged together in the modern era); Baker-Cristales, "Magical Pursuits."

83 Abrams, "Notes," 63.

84 Martin, "Introduction," 12.

85 Gilmore and Gilmore, "Restating the Obvious," 146; see also Harcourt, "Occupy Wall Street."

86 Jung, "Solidarity, Liberalism, History."

87 Kelley, "Introduction," 7.

88 Chen, "Limit Point of Capitalist Equality."

89 Skinner, "State."

90 Da Silva, *Global Idea of Race*; Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality"; Vargas, *Never Meant to Survive*; Wilderson, *Incognegro*; Hua, *Trafficking Women's Human Rights*; Singh, *Black Is a Country*; Rodriguez, *Forced Passages*; Hames-Garcia, *Fugitive Thought*; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*.

91 On the constitutive role of policing in creating race, see Sentas, *Traces of Terror*; Wagner, *Disturbing the Peace*; Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*; Childs, *Slaves of the State*.

92 Hartman, *Scenes*, 199.

93 Da Silva, *Global Idea of Race*; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*, 28; Vargas, *Never Meant to Survive*; James, *Resisting State Violence*, 46; Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*.

94 Clastres, *Society against the State*; Scott, *Art of Not Being Governed*; Biondi, *Sharing this Walk*.

95 Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*; Lepselter, *Resonance of Unseen Things*; Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*; Melossi, "Gazette of Morality and the Social Whip."

96 Cacho, *Social Death*, 17; emphasis in source; Foreman, *Locking Up Our Own*.

97 Cacho, *Social Death*; Paik, *Rightlessness*; Hong, *Ruptures of American Capital*; Reddy, *Freedom with Violence*; R. A. Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*; Dayan, *Law Is a White Dog*; Berger, *Captive Nation*; Randall Williams, *Divided World*. For a view of the state as ir-

redeemable as a result of its gendered, racialized, class nature, see W. Brown, "Finding the Man in the State."

98 My sense of this process is of a practical, stepwise practice dedicated to encouraging the irruptions of commons that already exist all around us, rejecting "reformist reforms" or "carceral humanism" (which "casts the jailers as caring social service providers," in James Kilgore's explanation) in favor of abolitionist reforms focused on building the structures that can sustain a stateless, cageless world; Harney and Moten, *Undercommons*; Kilgore, "Repackaging Mass Incarceration"; Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*; Ben-Moshe, "Tension between Abolition and Reform"; Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; Shabazz, *Spatializing Blackness*, esp. the epilogue, "Fertile Ground."

99 J. T. Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis*; Hinton, *From the War on Poverty*; Murakawa, *First Civil Right*.

CHAPTER 1. THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, THE LEAA, AND US POLICE

1 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, "Kerner Commission Transcripts and Agenda of Hearings," part 5, reel 3, frame 310.

2 Prashad, *Darker Nations*; A. Escobar, *Encountering Development*, chap. 2; N. Smith, "Satanic Geographies of Globalization"; Gregg, *Inside Out, Outside In*.

3 Rostow, *Stages of Economic Growth*. Even radical thinkers subscribed to the core of this orthodoxy, an arc of heroic transformation leaving ethnic particularism behind for a "mature" embrace of national fulfillment; Saldaña-Portillo, *Revolutionary Imagination*. On the anthropology of development, see also Pathy, "Anthropology and the Third World."

4 McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*, 11–16; Klare and Kornbluh, *Low-Intensity Warfare*; Schrader, "American Streets, Foreign Territory."

5 Steinberg, "Asian Bastion Tugs at U.S. Ties"; this just two months after the term's first mention in a major US newspaper, "General, 43, Heads Guerrilla Force." "Sprawling" in Kalyvas, "Paradox of Terrorism in Civil War," 129; Kalyvas also lists some of the institutional authors of these books, semiofficial think tanks such as the Special Operations Research Office (SORO), the Counterinsurgency Information Analysis Center, and the Center for Research in Social Systems; Lobe also notes the "endless stream of books" on counterinsurgency published between 1955 and 1968; Lobe, "U.S. Police Assistance," 38. See also Tullis, "Vietnam at Home"; Schrader, "American Streets, Foreign Territory"; Schrader, "Local Policing Meets Global Counterinsurgency"; McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*, 11–16; Klare and Kornbluh, *Low-Intensity Warfare*; Ahern, *Vietnam Declassified*; Ucko, *New Counterinsurgency Era*. Several authors argue that forces long before that were practicing counterinsurgency, but not under that name nor in a way that would generate institutional