

AMERICAN CROSSROADS

EDITED BY

EARL LEWIS, GEORGE LIPSITZ,

PEGGY PASCOE, GEORGE SÁNCHEZ, AND DANA TAKAGI

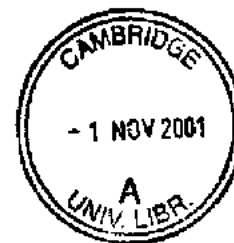
1. *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies*,
by José David Saldívar
2. *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites
in Texas Cotton Culture*, by Neil Foley
3. *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities
around Puget Sound*, by Alexandra Harmon
4. *Aztlán and Viet Nam: Chicano and Chicana Experiences
of the War*, edited by George Mariscal
5. *Immigration and the Political Economy of Home:
West Indian Brooklyn and American Indian Minneapolis*,
by Rachel Buff
6. *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the
Middle East, 1945–2000*, by Melani McAlister
7. *Lives at Risk: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's
Chinatown*, by Nayan Shah
8. *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic
Identity and Festival, 1934–1990*, by Lon Kurashige
9. *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular
Culture*, by Shelley Streeby
10. *Colored White: Transcending the Racial Past*, by David R. Roediger

200.3.c.200.147

Epic Encounters

*Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests
in the Middle East, 1945–2000*

MELANI McALISTER



University of California Press

BERKELEY LOS ANGELES LONDON

States as an imperiled private sphere and the Islamic Middle East as the pre-eminent politicized space from which terrorism effected its invasions. For more than a decade, that narrative had worked to produce a certain type of American identity, defined by the production of individuals who were "free of politics." Within this world of vulnerable families and lovers, terrorism threatened precisely what *had* to be threatened in order to establish the disinterested morality of the state's militarized response in the international arena. In the early 1990s, that sense of threat would be mobilized again, when, with the start of Operation Desert Storm, the United States launched its first all-out war against a Middle Eastern nation.

6 Military Multiculturalism in the Gulf War and After, 1990–1999

The point is, that history and destiny have made America the leader of the world that would be free. And the world that would be free is looking to us for inspiration. . . . We must play that role in whatever form it presents itself. . . . We cannot step back away from this position of leadership. If we can make a difference, we must make that difference.

—General Colin Powell, speaking
to the National Press Club, 1992

[The immigrants] appear as the result of colonization and decolonization and thus succeed in concentrating upon themselves both the continuation of imperial scorn and the resentment that is felt by the citizens of a fallen power, if not indeed a vague, phantasmatic longing for revenge.

—Etienne Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism"

In the early fall of 1990, the United States–led coalition against Iraq began what would become one of the largest military operations of the post–World War II period.¹ The multinational coalition of troops was initially mobilized in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; the official goal was to defend the border of Saudi Arabia and also to protect U.S. and Western "interests" in the Gulf. Operation Desert Storm involved almost seven hundred thousand troops, including more than five hundred thousand Americans, in the task of avenging what President George Bush described as the "rape" of Kuwait.² Ensuring the continued "flow of oil" was the most common argument for massive military response; protecting the "friendly" and "stable" monarchy in Saudi Arabia was another. Yet when the president announced the deployment of U.S. troops to the Gulf region, he did so in a short speech that linked the strategic argument to an explicitly moral plea: he asked Americans to support "the decision I've made to stand up for what's right and condemn what's wrong all in the cause of peace." He backed his justification

for doing "what's right," however, with a strong statement of the national interest of the United States in the Middle East:

My administration, as has been the case with every president from President Roosevelt to President Reagan, is committed to the security and stability of the Persian Gulf. . . . Our country now imports nearly half the oil it consumes and could face a major threat to its economic independence. Much of the world is even more dependent upon imported oil and is even more vulnerable to Iraqi threats. . . . Let us be clear, the sovereign independence of Saudi Arabia is of vital interest to the United States.³

By 1990, then, the president was able to call upon what seemed to be a widespread understanding of U.S. interests in the region, and to have those interests serve as a common currency in the justification of a massive commitment of U.S. military power.

As a political operation, the United States-led action was extraordinary: the American government managed to pull together a coalition that included eleven Middle Eastern states and twenty-five others. With the end of the cold war, the Soviet Union was no longer a major opposing force, so there was no fear of igniting a war against a more powerful opponent. Although some people in the United States clearly did have concerns about the biblical consequences of American involvement—a reissue of John Walvoord's *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis* sold more than six hundred thousand copies in ten weeks—in the secular world, the war seemed blessed.⁴ Under some pressure from the United States, even the United Nations backed the decision to intervene, issuing multiple Security Council resolutions demanding Iraqi withdrawal. Thus by the time the air war began, the forces of more than a dozen countries were staged in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Middle East, all of them effectively operating under U.S. command.

As a military operation, the action was equally successful. At every stage, from the initial deployment of defensive troops in August 1990, to the bombing attack on Iraqi positions in both Kuwait and Iraq that began on January 16, 1991, to the start of the ground war in February 1991, the United States and its allies brought together an unprecedented display of military force. The military actions succeeded in driving the Iraqis out of Kuwait and in inflicting severe damage on the Iraqi military and economic infrastructure, though they did not manage to kill or overthrow Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein. Estimates on the number of Iraqi casualties have varied widely, ranging from one hundred thousand (including civilians who

died as a result of war-inflicted damage) to fifteen hundred.⁵ What is quite clear, however, is that the United States achieved its major goals with an extraordinarily low allied casualty rate—fewer than three hundred Americans died in the conflict.⁶ In the years that followed, the United States led the world politically in part because it operated a high-tech, high-powered military machine that seemed, at least on this battlefield, invincible.

The American armed forces that were untouchable on Middle Eastern battlefields were equally inviolable in public discussions of Desert Storm at home. In the self-consciously post-Vietnam discourse about the Gulf, those who supported the war donned yellow ribbons and bought "Support Our Troops" bumper stickers. For the most part, not even the most vocal opponents of the war found it appropriate to criticize the troops or their conduct. Antiwar protestors displayed banners and placards that called for the U.S. government to "Support the Troops: Bring Them Home." Both sides seemed to agree that "the troops" were indeed "ours"—to send or bring home, that the military meant America, and that Americans (in their diverse ways) were supporting the military.⁷

Many commentators, at the time of the Gulf War and since, have analyzed the celebratory and nationalist slant of the coverage of Desert Storm in the U.S. news media. Their criticisms have been important in establishing the limits of what the public knew, or could know, through the saturation news coverage that made the war into a television event. The televisuality of the war also has seemed, to some, to mark its "postmodern" nature: its apparent immediacy in terms of news coverage and yet its strange unreality, despite its nightly presence in American homes. In this, the coverage of Desert Storm was less a transformation than a consolidation of earlier trends. Engaging that nexus of television, representations of the military, U.S. nationalism, and the Middle East that had been forged in the coverage of Israeli actions and then in the Iran hostage crisis and its aftermath, it was the perhaps inevitable end result of more than two decades in which the Middle East functioned as a signifier for the post-Vietnam decline of the American empire. Yet the story being told about the Gulf War, by both policymakers and journalists, was that it was the beginning of something quite new. "Our troops" would represent the United States in what President Bush called the "New World Order," even as their strength and invincibility made that order possible.

In two very different ways, the success of military action in the Gulf War vanquished the ghost of Vietnam from American discourse. For the Right, the Gulf War provided the final proof that the U.S. military defeat in Vietnam, and later in Iran, had been caused by the failure of the national lead-

ership to authorize the use of adequate force and allow the military freedom of action. The Vietnam Syndrome could be overcome with the proper demonstration of an alternative to the Vietnam experience. Given enough will and resources, the Israeli model of quick, decisive action would work; new military doctrine, advocated by General Colin Powell, among others, called for the early use of "decisive force" in any engagement. The failures of the 1960s and 1970s could be blamed on the lack of political will to use the military force available. As President Bush stated in a nationally televised speech at the start of the ground war: "I've told the American people before that this will not be another Vietnam and I repeat that here tonight. Our troops . . . will not be asked to fight with one hand tied behind their backs."⁸ After Desert Storm, the specter of Vietnam would no longer haunt the halls of the Pentagon.

To the degree that Vietnam symbolized the possibility of effective antiwar protest and large-scale social mobilization *against* the exercise of U.S. power, the Gulf War also revised the legacy of Vietnam for the Left. Antiwar sentiment was widespread and rather well organized in the early days of the Gulf War; large national demonstrations were held in both Washington, D.C., and San Francisco on January 26, 1991.⁹ But this opposition failed to have the slightest effect on the outcome of the conflict, nor did it have a significant impact on public discussion of the war. The peace movement of the 1980s and 1990s was organized to oppose "another Vietnam." The assumption was that war *meant* Vietnam and that what the Vietnam War had shown was that, over time and with enough information, the U.S. public would likely turn against intervention. But the Left had simply failed to understand the changes in geopolitical circumstances that had transformed the meanings of intervention. As the cold war sputtered to an end, third world nations could no longer count on alliances with the Soviet Union to counter potential U.S. military action. For that reason, the situation for Iraq, isolated and without powerful allies, was very different than that in Vietnam. Nor had the Left paid sufficient attention to the Pentagon debates about U.S. military strategy: the advocates of "decisive force" argued that the United States should not pursue any more "low-intensity" conflicts that might prevent the full use of airpower and military hardware. By the time of Desert Storm, the changes in global political alliances and U.S. military theory had made a protracted engagement unlikely.

In addition, the Left had not fully accounted for the changes in what the military signified in American culture. For those leftists and liberals who had lived through the Vietnam era, had feared the draft, and had seen the returning body bags, the military was a dangerous part of a state apparatus

that disproportionately took the lives of people of color and the poor. But over the course of the 1980s, the all-volunteer army had come to mean something very different to most people: it signified not only patriotism but also opportunity; it was not an example of the racism in American life but a potential counter to it. The racially diverse families who sent their sons and daughters to the Gulf were often ambivalent about the risks and the dangers, but they were almost uniformly certain that the "new army" represented them, and that they, in all their diversity, represented America.

In this context, televised news coverage meant something new as well. After Vietnam, most people, including the Left, had assumed that the fundamental impact of television was to bring war to the living room and thus increase the public's opposition to violence.¹⁰ For people across the political spectrum, this understanding of the antiwar impact of television was fundamentally challenged by the relationship forged between the hyperrepresentation of Desert Storm and its joyful public embrace.

THE WAR AS IMAGE

The Gulf War was simultaneously a major military action and a staged media event, and from the beginning the undeniable marriage of these two aspects has required observers to account for its new kind of media politics. From the time Iraq crossed the border into Kuwait in August 1990, the United States and its allies responded with military actions that were also consciously staged with the media in mind. In August, the United States began sending troops and supplies to Saudi Arabia in a long, slow buildup of force. Officials argued that the combined forces of the allied coalition would at least prevent Iraq from going farther and invading Saudi Arabia; eventually, the mission was expanded to include driving Iraq out of Kuwait. As hundreds of thousands of troops and untold millions of dollars worth of equipment made their way to the Middle East, the world's press corps was invited to explain their movements as a display of U.S. resolve. Also over the course of the fall, the U.S. military began a massive call-up of reserve forces still at home. As the reservists began to report to their bases, American newspaper and television correspondents were there to chronicle the human drama of those who left their families, work, and communities to fulfill their duty. Working through the United Nations, the allied coalition even managed to set a date for the start of the war: for more than eight weeks, television and newspapers reported that Saddam Hussein faced a January 15, 1991, deadline for withdrawal from Kuwait. If he did not withdraw—and few expected he would—the coalition would launch its air war.

As the media descended on Saudi Arabia to await the countdown, many observers argued that the fundamental rules of reporting had shifted in this war. The misrepresentations and absences that would typically be expected in mainstream media coverage of U.S. foreign policy had become something more insidious, an intensification of "coverage" of the events and the military apparatus that actually seemed to destroy the very possibility of critical distance or an informed citizenry.¹¹ The specific military actions of the coalition were of course followed in minute detail. CNN, the all-news cable network that had begun operating in 1980, set a standard of saturation coverage that was followed by the traditional networks.¹² In January, as the UN deadline for the Iraqi pullout from Kuwait approached, newscasts excitedly counted the days or hours left before the expected beginning of the action. As one observer commented, "All through the winter of 1990, the production had its own built-in 'coming attractions'—the many variations on 'showdown in the Gulf' that teased the viewer with a possible January opening on all screens in domestic multiplexes throughout the nation."¹³ People in the United States watched the buildup and then the war on their televisions; they soon spoke of Patriot missiles, AWACS aircraft, and "pinpoint" bombings with a kind of insider's knowledge.¹⁴

Despite the amount of time devoted to reporting, the quality of the information being relayed was quite poor. The allied coalition placed tight limits on the movement of reporters in the field and prevented most "unauthorized" access to military personnel or military information.¹⁵ Despite television's self-representation as offering "dramatic live coverage" of the conflict, there was often very little to be seen. Some of the best footage was provided by the military itself: film from the radar screens inside the airplane cockpits as they targeted and bombed selected Iraqi targets. Such images were utterly internal to the view of the U.S. military; thus they led to the frequent claim that, on TV, the war looked like a video game.¹⁶ Even the CNN reporters in Baghdad, the only television crew to cross behind Iraqi lines, were strictly limited in where they could travel. Many times they were reduced to describing what they could see from their hotel rooms.¹⁷ Often, in the absence of other material, the primary story became the emotions, suffering, and bravery of the reporters themselves, combined with similar stories of the emotions, suffering, and bravery of the U.S. soldiers' families back home.

For many critics of the war, however, the problem of the representation of Desert Storm went well beyond questions of censorship or adequate reporting. The dynamic of saturation live coverage led to a discussion, especially in academic circles, of the Gulf War as the first postmodern war. This

was the first time, it was sometimes said, in which representation of the event *was* the event. Media scholar Tom Engelhardt has described the war as heralding the beginning of "total television"—a package of TV/movie/newspaper/bumper sticker/theme park info-tainment that was being offered to viewers by new multimedia giants like Time-Warner or Rupert Murdoch, which owned stakes in each of those cultural industries.¹⁸ Like the Tur exhibit and the Iran crisis, the Gulf War was marketed through a broad range of commodities: American flags, of course, and yellow ribbons, which returned in force with the Gulf War.¹⁹ There were T-shirts, too, one with an image of Saddam Hussein that said "Nuke Their Ass and Take the Gas"; another showed a camel in target sights, saying "I'd Fly 10,000 Miles to Smoke a Camel"; a third showed the mushroom cloud of a nuclear explosion with the caption "The New Iraq: Parking Lot of the Middle East." One could also buy Desert Storm bubble-gum cards or Ralph Lauren red, white, and blue coffee mugs, or perhaps settle for watching patriotic advertisements by companies like Coca-Cola. Participation in watching and shopping did not *reflect* experience, it *was* the experience.²⁰

Benedict Anderson has argued that in the early development of nationalism in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, cultural consumption, particularly of novels and newspapers, helped define the parameters of the "imagined community" that made local populations into nations, fusing differences of region, language, class, or religion into a "common culture" that reorganized both time and space.²¹ In the late twentieth century, the central role of television during the Gulf War suggested a hyperextension of that logic, with time organized by the disruption of routine television programming for twenty-four-hour news. The generalized social practice of watching the war on TV was, as Engelhardt points out, "perhaps the purest imagined community ever achieved—the most complete erasure of complicating social difference through the convergence of private selfhood and social identity."²² Television had been, from its beginnings, a technology that inserted public discourse into private space. Now the crisis produced a sense that what we did in our homes was nonetheless a shared experience of great intensity.

Just before the fighting broke out in January 1991, the postmodernist philosopher Jean Baudrillard published an article in the British newspaper the *Guardian* that described the impending war as a mass-media simulacrum, that is, an event that did not need to happen, precisely because the media bombardment of the Western public with video game imagery had already created the "experience" of war in advance.²³ Even Christopher Norris, a British theorist who had spent years criticizing the tenets of Bau-

drillardian postmodernist theory, described the Gulf conflict as "in some sense, a 'postmodern' war":

How else could one explain the extraordinary inverse relationship between extent of coverage and level of informed public grasp; the profusion of meaningless statistical data served up to create an illusory sense of objective, factual reporting; the absurd claims about "precision bombing" and "pinpoint accuracy," designed to convince us that civilian casualties were almost non-existent . . . amounting, one could argue, to a wholesale collapse of the "public sphere" of informed critical debate.²⁴

This profound discomfort with the media-ization of the war expressed more than uneasiness with the patriotic outpouring that accompanied it. The problem was often expressed in relationship to the earlier conflict in Vietnam, and to the received assumptions that it was television coverage—bringing a war to the dinner table via the nightly television news—that had been at the heart of the breakdown in public support for Vietnam. In fact, most observers assumed that television news had, as a medium, "a pacifist bias," in that showing the horror of war on television was likely to lead the public to tire of violence in almost any situation.²⁵ In the Gulf, however, the United States was winning a war that was being represented as essentially bloodless. Antiwar activists struggled with the problem of how to explain the new realities of a "living room war": the more the media covered the operations, the more the U.S. public supported the war.²⁶

Vietnam was only part of the history being elicited and vanquished in the Gulf. The history of the Iran hostage crisis, or rather, the history of the news coverage of that crisis, was signified everywhere. ABC, for example, began each night's coverage with an icon that consciously echoed the earlier moment: "War in the Gulf: Day X."²⁷ It was the discourse of Iran that brought out the yellow ribbons the minute the troops were dispatched and then allowed President Bush to define the nature of the "threat" in the Gulf as Saddam Hussein's "terrorist regime." When Saddam Hussein obliged expectations by taking nearly one thousand Americans as hostages for several months before the bombing began, the news accounts were a frenzy of replay and recapitulation: stories of the hostage families, this time against a backdrop of the near certainty of retaliation.²⁸ In fact, the layered history of television coverage of earlier crises was part of what television news aimed to evoke. With the self-promoting Iran-derived icons and the self-important narrative of hostages, captivity, and reporter bravery, the news of the war

was a markedly narcissistic affair that depended for its legibility on the television-watching history of its audience.

Ironically, the legacy of Iran was also a crucial aspect of the U.S. diplomatic and political failures that proceeded and enabled the war with Iraq. During the eight-year-long war between Iran and Iraq (1980–1988) that had followed the consolidation of the Ayatollah Khomeini's rule in Iran, U.S. policy had generally tilted toward Iraq. The general assumption among policymakers was that U.S. interests lay in keeping either side from building up too much strength or becoming a preeminent military power in the region, but the emotional pull of anti-Iranian sentiment was a strong force. No one in Washington was under any illusions about Saddam Hussein, whose secular nationalism and moderate economic egalitarianism provided only the smallest fig leaf for his dictatorial and repressive rule. But the United States nonetheless provided Iraq with satellite photos and information, as well as weapons and equipment, in the hopes of ensuring that if Iraq did not win the war with Iran, it at least would not lose. It was this history, perhaps, that encouraged U.S. planners to underestimate the extent of the Iraqi threat to Kuwait and led the U.S. ambassador to Iraq to signal in the summer of 1990 that the United States would not intervene in "Arab-Arab" conflicts over borders. Fearing Islamic fundamentalism in Iran, American policymakers allowed themselves an uneasy alliance with Saddam Hussein that lasted almost a decade.²⁹

Some scholars have suggested that much of the anxiety evoked by the Gulf War among media and cultural critics had to do with the fact that television news played such a key role in the public discourse. In a certain sense, the critics of the media war were expressing not only their concern about the war but also their anxiety about television as a medium. The Gulf War was a spectacle, they argued, and as such it represented "the ascendancy of the visual and . . . its frantic, continuous, and ultimately hollow deployment."³⁰ For these observers, the problem with television news—or often television in general—was that it evacuated "history," discouraging analysis and contextualization. Visuality itself appeared the culprit: things moved too fast, critics said; language was emptied; images replaced thought. In fact, the evacuation of critical discourse in the Gulf War likely had less to do with any kind of inevitable distortion by television's images and more to do with what was *not* on-screen: few American soldiers in body bags; almost nothing of the grittiness of ground battle and its associated injuries; remarkably little of the devastating effects in Iraq. The form could become content only if the content was uninformed.³¹

But critics of the "spectacle" of the Gulf War assumed that spectacle was in itself a problem, that elaborate visual displays were by definition opposed to knowledge, history, and truth. This denigration of the visual as a source of information connected back to the earlier Orientalist fascination with spectacle. Nineteenth-century Europeans and Americans were ambivalent about the image: they trusted *only* that which could be "rendered up to be viewed" and yet simultaneously distrusted precisely those mechanisms (the photograph, the panorama, even vision itself) that promised unmediated access to the real. The instability of viewing became a metonym for the uncertainty of all knowledge: If seeing was *not* necessarily believing, then how could anyone secure access to truth?³²

Public debates about television have long participated in this equivocal evaluation of the powers of the visual. Utopian suggestions that TV (then cable TV, then the Internet) could be a great democratic leveler in providing information to the public have generally existed side by side with dire warnings of the consequences of television: the supposed dumbing-down that detractors claimed comes with "passive" viewing rather than "active" reading; the claims about the loss of community or family conversation once everyone sits in front of the TV; the low moral values TV was said to impart. These criticisms have generally been present when television was being discussed as an entertainment medium; when its role was as the primary source for news and information, the anxieties were compounded.

With the Gulf War, an earlier concern with the partiality of the visual and the problems of epistemology reasserted itself full force. Without denying the fact of hyperrepresentation or the specific problems of the ownership and control of the media, it is important to move beyond this dichotomy of spectacle versus knowledge, the visual versus history, television versus truth. The seemingly sophisticated analyses of the Gulf War that focused on the formal effects of the television medium, along with the political discussions of the postmodern loss of history, often shared a common limitation: they assumed a prelapsarian world in which "the visual" did not interfere with the production of a more honest historical narrative, in which history itself was somehow available as a content for contemplation, separate from the narratives that framed it and made it readable. Such analyses ignored both the contents and the contexts of what was shown in favor of a general, categorical dismissal.³³ But instead of seeing visual media as an evacuation of history, we need to see them *as* history—not just because culture is part of larger politics, and vice versa, but also because, from the Holy Land panoramas to the biblical epic films to 1980s action movies, visual representations have both framed and claimed history. They have done so in

ways that linked them to, rather than separated them from, other forms of cultural production and other forms of history writing. It is true that form does matter, since formal conventions are the language in which cultural products speak. But the meanings of cultural forms lie not in the forms themselves but in their deployment in a larger discursive field. As Bourdieu and others have suggested, meanings are made in the interaction of different cultural practices. In the case of the Gulf War, we must, of course, ask what role the hyperextension of visual images played, but in order to understand that, we need to know the intertexts and contexts of Gulf War television—how it engaged with other narratives about history and identity to envision the world it was helping to create.

THE MULTICULTURALISM SCARE

In April 1991, just after the Gulf War ended, the conservative columnist George Will suggested in *Newsweek* that the chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Lynne Cheney, had a tougher task than her husband, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, since she was facing an escalating battle over multiculturalism at home. "In this low-visibility, high-intensity war," Will wrote, "Lynne Cheney is secretary of domestic defense. The foreign adversaries her husband, Dick, must keep at bay are less dangerous, in the long run, than the domestic forces with which she must deal." At the NEH, Lynne Cheney was faced with "domestic forces" that were politicizing literature, challenging the traditional literary canon, and supporting the "theater of victimization" that was increasingly apparent in academic life. Will argued that these forces, comprising literature scholars and student radicals, among others, were imposing issues of "group politics"—racial, ethnic, and sexual—onto literature, and thus were "fighting against the conservation of the common culture that is the nation's social cement." The battle for the future of the NEH was crucial, Will argued, because as much as any Supreme Court justice or political player, Cheney was in charge of "constitutional things": she was engaged in a battle for the maintenance of those habits, mores, and ideas that make up the "national mind" that "truly constitutes America."³⁴

Will's battle cry, his insistence that the campus literature curriculum was emerging as the site of a major cultural and political struggle, was part of a groundswell. As the conflict with Iraq heated up, the U.S. news media launched a fiery debate not about the pros and cons of the war but about the meanings of multiculturalism and its much-derided twin, "political correctness." Over the course of six months, the supposed rise of "p.c." on uni-

versity campuses rated the cover of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *New Republic*, as well as long stories in the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, to name just a few.³⁵ As the 1990s began, the mainstream media took up conservatives' clarion call against the putative takeover of university campuses and intellectual life by radicals who championed "group rights" in the name of people of color, women, gay men and lesbians, and others.³⁶

The tone of the initial articles in the major newspapers and magazines was almost uniformly incredulous, even hysterical. The basic traditions of education and democracy were said to be under attack by what the headlines called "The Victims' Revolution" or "The Thought Police."³⁷ Colleges were often the focus, not only because they were the sites of student activism but also because colleges were assumed to be part of the ideological cement of American identity and nationalism. "For most of American history," *Time* explained, "the educational system has reflected and reinforced the bedrock beliefs of the larger society."³⁸ Presumably, one purpose of education was to teach students to experience their national identity as primary over other ties, be they racial or political or cultural. Now, critics argued, professors and students seemed determined to privilege "minor literature" and "victims' history" over the unifying narratives that were the basis of national cohesion.

The attack on political correctness was multifaceted and often diffuse, but it had its roots in a complex network of conservative organizations and think tanks that, beginning in the 1980s, had made support for conservatism on campuses a primary organizational priority. Conservative political leaders and foundations supported a network of student newspapers that they hoped would bring conservative ideas to key universities; they also began to help student organizations bring nationally known leaders of the Right to speak on campus. In 1985, the organization Accuracy in Academia was founded to expose the presence of radical faculty members on campus and to monitor professors who failed to include conservative views in their lectures or who demonstrated Marxist leanings. Overall, these and other efforts were designed to counter what many conservatives believed was the liberal bias in higher education. Right-wing activists also argued that intellectual standards were being lowered by affirmative action and even by the expansion of financial aid.³⁹

Certainly it was the case that campuses had changed in the 1970s and 1980s. By the time of the Gulf War, universities had become far more racially and ethnically diverse, registering in microcosm the changing character of the U.S. population. In 1965, new immigration laws had altered the previous system of immigration quotas, which had been heavily tilted in

favor of Europeans, to allow an increased number of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. By 1990, the share of U.S. immigrants designated as white had decreased to approximately 50 percent, down from 90 percent in 1970. And the absolute number of newcomers was rising rapidly; in 1990, one out of four foreign-born residents had been in the United States less than five years.⁴⁰

At the same time, the identity movements of the 1960s and 1970s, from Black Power to Chicano and American Indian movements to feminism, questioned the older model of assimilation. They suggested that certain cultural differences would not, and should not, simply fade into a national mosaic. This new generation would no longer necessarily "Americanize" their names or put aside their languages. Those coming out of the identity movements also tended to celebrate the new immigration as part of a larger challenge to the post-World War II homogenization of American life. After the 1960s, college students frequently organized themselves along lines of race, gender, sexuality, religion, or politics, often with little attention to nationalist frameworks.

Critics of the new multiculturalism feared that these identity movements would undermine the common culture, that they were a threat to the nation precisely because they might lead—in a frequently repeated phrase—to the "balkanization" of America. At the heart of the issue lay the question of how the nation as a whole, now newly self-conscious about the diversity of its population, would come to engage issues of race, nation, gender, and sexuality. It was perhaps not surprising, then, that the racial and political tensions that were erupting across the United States (the police beating of Rodney King would be caught on videotape in April 1991) were also playing out in complicated ways on college campuses.⁴¹

For conservatives, "political correctness" in the academy was the final holdout of feminism and radical racial politics, both of which had been defeated or otherwise driven underground by the New Right resurgence of the 1980s. As outlined in countless media reports, political correctness was a composite of at least three related issues, which were often presented as one. First, college students were supposedly no longer learning the traditional humanities canon focused on "great literature" and "Western civilization." That is, professors were teaching a left-wing version of the humanities that emphasized the literature and experiences of people of color and women; thus Amy Tan and Frances Harper were displacing the truly great writers like Melville and Hemingway. Anti-p.c. critics decried these changes as "politicizing" the teaching of literature, as if before p.c. arrived on campus there were no political choices involved in deciding how to teach

writings from the Civil War or the work of socially aware writers like William Faulkner or Richard Wright. Sometimes this criticism was paired, implicitly or explicitly, with echoes of the affirmative action debate as commentators suggested that, these days, certain groups of students at the university were only interested in seeing "themselves" represented.⁴²

Second, critics attacked the rise of poststructuralist epistemologies among academics. Intellectuals were no longer teaching students to search for truth and to believe in the possibility of objective knowledge, critics argued; instead, they were undermining the very foundations of democratic culture by challenging the idea of timeless values and universal truths. Moving away from an approach that emphasized aesthetic appreciation, academic critics "strip[ped] literature of its authority" and put relativism and relevance in its stead.⁴³

In fact, there *had* been important changes in how many scholars viewed issues of cultural value and historical truths; these faculty might not dominate academic departments, but they did change how history, literature, and culture were taught, at least in some courses. Some college teachers did begin, for example, to teach Shakespeare less as a great author of universal literature and more as a writer deeply steeped in the political and cultural developments of his time, including issues of colonialism, gender, and race.⁴⁴ Some of these teachers and scholars insisted that all ideas about aesthetics and beauty were matters of historical construction, neither self-evident nor universal. Others made a narrower claim: that the aesthetic greatness of certain works of art could not be separated from their worldliness. According to the critics of political correctness, academics of this new school were forcing political values onto students; those who taught literature or history in the traditional way, on the other hand, were not forcing *their* values on students but instead were helping to produce a "common culture."

Finally, the critics of p.c. concluded that this new orthodoxy in the classroom was leading both students and administrators to censor unpopular speech on campus. The most frequently discussed manifestation of this supposed censorship was the development of university speech codes that prohibited "hate speech" such as racist or homophobic epithets. In one oft-cited example, a Brown University student was suspended after he wandered through campus in the middle of the night, drunk, shouting racist epithets. In another case, a University of Connecticut sophomore was required to move off campus after she posted a sign on her dorm room that listed "people who would be shot on sight"; the list included "preppies," "bimbos," and "homos."⁴⁵

On this last point, constitutional protections of speech were in fact sometimes at issue. Some of the administrative decisions about the rules of stu-

dent conduct appeared to be little more than rule by fiat: they seemed to rest on an assumption that students were a particular class, whose youth and close proximity to each other (and to campus administrators) denied them their constitutional privileges. But despite their claims to be defending free speech, the anti-p.c. forces avoided the discussion of how to support democracy in the university. They failed to engage in any reasoned debate about the parameters of free speech in the specific situation of college campuses or even to acknowledge that the learning environment for some students could be poisoned by the actions of others. The speech codes, critics claimed, were nothing more than an effort by the politically correct to force their (multicultural) values on others. As Michael Kinsley pointed out in the *Washington Post*, however, most of the "p.c. scare" was based on a very few widely publicized incidents and a cobbled-together conglomeration of unrelated examples of campus racial or sexual tensions in which parties disagreed about appropriate remedies. The anti-p.c. diatribes simply produced "lists of things the writer [found] objectionable and would like—in the spirit of toleration and free inquiry—to expunge from the college curricula."⁴⁶ Or, as another observer described it, the red menace of the 1950s became the rainbow menace of the 1990s.⁴⁷

The furor—and it was an extraordinary furor—over issues of multiculturalism on campus had an explicitly political agenda. A young woman who graduated from Harvard in 1991 described the partisan nature of the debate in *Harper's*. Majoring in U.S. and British history and literature, she wrote that she had not seen much evidence of the supposed multiculturalism of the curriculum: none of her courses at Harvard had, for example, ever required her to read a work by a black woman writer. Nor had she ever felt that the discussion of ideas was limited in her classes or, in general, on the campus. She did have one experience of feeling censored, however. When she went to an open rally called to "support our troops" during the Gulf War, she tried to speak in favor of the troops but against the war. The organizers turned off the microphone, and the audience shouted her down. The next day, supporters of the war were allowed to speak freely at an anti-war rally. Such intolerance of antiwar dissent was not unusual in the nation at large, of course, so it was not surprising to see it mirrored on campuses. By 1991, the tone of national discussion about the Middle East and the Gulf War had its own orthodoxy; as the student described it, she was silenced not by the politically correct but by the "patriotically correct."⁴⁸ An officer from the Los Angeles Police Department suggested a similar link between war abroad and conflict at home: "Saddam Hussein scared the shit out of us with chemical weapons and even though . . . he didn't use the gas,

we still made him pay the price. Same with Rodney King."⁴⁹ With such commentaries in mind, some observers on the Left suggested that a commitment to simplistic nationalism and racism underlay the near-simultaneous launch of the Gulf War and the attack on political correctness. But these critics missed a far more important connection. The concerns of multiculturalism were not, in fact, ignored or undone by the discourse on the Gulf War. They were incorporated by it.

ALL THAT WE CAN BE

The public representations of the Gulf War did not focus solely on images of technical mastery and precision bombing; many news reports also emphasized the changing character of the U.S. armed forces that were winning the war, highlighting the racial diversity of the new military. As newspapers and television reported the call-up that would mobilize regular duty and reserve forces from communities across the nation, their predominant theme was that the U.S. soldiers were a microcosm of the U.S. population—a heterogeneous mixture of races and ethnicities, drawn from small towns and local communities all around the nation, and including not only black and white men but also Latinos, Asian-Americans, Native American Indians, and even women (presumably of all races).

The image of the soldier has a long and important history in the construction and reinforcement of national identity. As historian Oscar Campomanes has argued, the soldier, as both historical referent and contemporary embodiment, often becomes "the common sign in which a whole nation must recognize itself."⁵⁰ In a situation in which most commentators agreed that the representations of the war were a crucial part of its meaning, it made sense that the images of the military took on a particular emotional investment. At stake was the self-representation of the nation, and thus the political status of the United States at the height of its reconstituted global power. After the Gulf War, politicians and the press alike expected that the United States would now be able to intervene whenever and wherever its leaders felt necessary. The representations of the military provided the mandate for that power: the diversity of its armed forces made the United States a world citizen, with all the races and nations of the globe represented in its population. As the military would represent the diversity of the United States, the United States, as represented in its military, would contain the world.

It was true that the soldiers who went to the Gulf were in some ways significantly different from those who had fought in Vietnam. The all-

volunteer army was more racially diverse, older (the average age of those who went to the Gulf was twenty-seven), more likely to be married, and better trained than the army of the 1970s. In addition, a relatively high percentage of the soldiers who went to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were reservists. The increased reliance on reserve forces came about as a result of policy changes in the 1970s that aimed to develop a smaller standing army more dependent on reserve forces for large-scale conflict. Acting in the wake of Vietnam, policymakers believed that the draft was no longer politically feasible; reserve forces were also cheaper than a full standing army. One result of this decision was that any major conflict would require a call-up of the reserves, presumably making it harder for the government to carry out a war without the general support of the population (which would be sending off its civilian family members and employees to the war).⁵¹

Commentators enthusiastically highlighted the composition of the all-volunteer "new army"—an army that now visibly included women. More than forty thousand American women served in the Gulf; they represented only 11 percent of the total force, but that was up from 1.5 percent in Vietnam. Both *Newsweek* and *People* featured "women warriors" on their covers within a month of the call-up.⁵² The policy forbidding women to operate in combat missions on the front lines was still in place during the Gulf War, and columnists in several major newspapers discussed the impact of women's increased participation, debating whether the war would signal a change in the military's stance. Women were already allowed to operate in support positions (refueling, communications, medical rescue) that took them to the front lines; sixteen women died during the deployment, eleven of them in combat.⁵³

The public discourse acknowledged women as potential combatants in complicated ways. When women soldiers themselves were interviewed, they insisted that "combat has no gender," and that "you can be tough and still be a female." Many of the reports simply lionized the women, though some stories focused on the virtually unprecedented phenomenon of dual-career military families: What happened to children, for example, when their fathers and mothers went to fight? The issues of morale and sexuality were never far from the surface, however, as when conservative commentators suggested that women in combat would be subject to so much sexism and sexual harassment that their presence would be disruptive to discipline.⁵⁴

Other discussions, particularly prominent in the African American press, centered around whether black soldiers and families were bearing "too much of the burden." Black soldiers made up 30 percent of active troops in Desert Storm, but polls showed support for the war to be consistently lower

among African Americans than among whites: in February 1991, only 48 percent of blacks supported the war while 85 percent of whites did.⁵⁵ The disproportionate representation of black (male and female) soldiers on the battlefield led many African American leaders to speak out against the risks and to oppose the war.⁵⁶ Several commentators, even those who supported the war, wondered whether "this time" black servicemen would be afforded a better deal on their return home.⁵⁷

Latinos, Asian-Americans, and American Indians also served in the Gulf. Military officials often touted this diversity while simultaneously portraying it as essentially irrelevant. "Well, see, we just have soldiers," one officer told a reporter who asked about race relations. The soldiers themselves told a more complicated story—of racial tension that coexisted with camaraderie, of racially segregated socializing, and of "jokes" that not infrequently got out of hand. One private, born in Jamaica of East Indian and Chinese parents, said he felt it was impossible to complain about the constant racial humor: "It's a tricky subject, and word gets around sometimes. You gotta be careful."⁵⁸ Despite these signs of conflict and dissent, however, the general tenor of the reporting about the war was that the nation had pulled together in the face of crisis, and that Americans were forging on the battlefield the respectful "rainbow" that seemed so elusive at home.

That enthusiasm was nowhere more evident than in the televised coverage of Super Bowl XXV, played just ten days after the bombing attack began in January 1991. The fortuitously timed athletic contest, already a major media event, provided an opportunity for a multilayered patriotic display. Fans brought thousands of small American flags and posters to the game, with made-for-TV signs reading "America's Best Citizens Support Our GIs" and "Go USA." As the game began, the African American singer Whitney Houston performed the national anthem; as she sang, the camera dissolved to images of an African American marine in close-up and long shots of rows of enlisted men and women lined up on the field. At halftime, ABC presented a highly produced news summary of recent events in the Gulf, including live shots of soldiers in Saudi Arabia watching the Super Bowl in their barracks. On the field, the halftime show included a solo by a young boy who dedicated his song "to the real heroes in the Middle East protecting freedom for all of us kids." At another point, a large group of children whose parents were serving in the war paraded across the field wearing yellow ribbons and carrying flags, while the cameras zoomed in to highlight their ethnic and racial diversity. The final performance came from the crowd itself, which on cue turned over red, white, and blue cards that made the Super Bowl shield, visible only to the television cameras over-



Figure 23. The multiracial brotherhood of war: an African American and a Native American soldier take a break together. The diversity of the U.S. forces was the subject of countless articles before and during the Gulf War. Photo by Margaret Thomas. Courtesy of *The Washington Post*.

head in the Goodyear blimp. As Jim Castonguay has argued, ABC and the NFL presented the Super Bowl as a morale booster for both the troops and the folks at home, "performing an indispensable USO-like function for the troops who were enjoying the game along with the home TV viewer."⁵⁹ In this Super Bowl, unlike the fictional one in *Black Sunday*, the United States represents itself, to itself, as having the will to fight.

It was within this narrative that General Colin Powell came to embody the preeminent soldier-statesman, the sign of the nation in its expansionist mode. Powell, the first African-American chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was perhaps the most respected public leader to emerge from the war.⁶⁰ During the conflict, Powell served as a dignified and highly visible leader whose no-nonsense approach to winning the war made him an apt symbol of both multiculturalism at home and the New World Order abroad. Powell seemed above the fray of day-to-day politics, the consummate soldier whose sense of duty to his country transcended partisan allegiances. He publicly supported the overall aims of the war and was a passionate defender of both the honor and the prowess of the U.S. military.⁶¹ He thus played a key role

in revitalizing the image of the armed forces, still tainted by events in Vietnam and the failed hostage rescue mission in Iran.

At the daily press briefings during the war, Powell's straightforward style and plain speech won him a great deal of admiration. His famous explanation of the U.S. strategy against Iraq was a case in point. "Our strategy in going after this army is very simple," he said in a televised news conference. "First we are going to cut it off, and then we are going to kill it."⁶² Powell was also a primary spokesperson for the notion of an expanding international role for the United States. Although he believed that the use of military power should be circumspect (he supported U.S. intervention in Haiti but opposed it in Bosnia), he had played a key role in developing military strategies that focused on deep strikes into enemy territory and the quick achievement of all-out victories. (He was also a significant player in the bureaucratic reorganization that had, in the 1980s, dramatically increased the influence of military officers in determining the goals and conduct of war.)⁶³ In his autobiography, released after the end of the war, Powell stated proudly that no other nation could "hope to match or challenge the military and economic power of the free world led by the United States."⁶⁴

Like a lot of African Americans facing limited job opportunities, Powell had joined the military as a young man and had stayed on. He never tired of saying that the military was an excellent career for black Americans: "I wish that there were other activities in our society and in our nation that were as open as the military is to upward mobility, to achievement, to allowing [blacks] in."⁶⁵ Since the post-Vietnam move to an all-volunteer military, black participation in the armed forces had jumped noticeably: in the early 1990s, 23 percent of all military personnel were black, compared with 11 percent in the general population.⁶⁶ Although many commentators correctly described this disproportionate representation as the "poverty draft," it was nonetheless undeniable that the military had become something of a haven for black men. African Americans reenlisted at almost twice the rate of whites, and their opportunities for advancement and promotion were better in the armed forces than in virtually any civilian corporation. In 1991, blacks made up 32 percent of the army's enlisted personnel and 11 percent of its officers; this was not, of course, an equitable ratio, but it compared favorably with the Fortune 500, where only 1 percent of upper management was African American.⁶⁷ The numbers suggested something similar for black women. While the discussions of "women in the military" often erased racial differences among women, or ignored nonwhite women altogether, the rates of participation for black women were strikingly high: 48 percent of all women in the Gulf were African American.⁶⁸ The record of

African American leadership and achievement in the military, and General Powell's role as one of the highest-ranking and most influential black men in recent history, meant that the military was also held up by many commentators, both black and white, as a model of successful efforts to end racism and discrimination in employment.⁶⁹

Powell became, in this context, the nation's premier citizen-soldier, the living embodiment of the institution in which the whole nation must recognize itself. At the time he retired from service in 1993 (after clashing with President Clinton over several issues ranging from gays in the military to women in combat), Powell was introduced at one farewell dinner as "the only man who could today win either the Democratic or the Republican presidential nomination without ever setting foot in New Hampshire."⁷⁰ Journalists from liberal to conservative embraced him. The right-wing *National Review* described him as "America's Black Eisenhower,"⁷¹ while the *New York Times* suggested that, should Powell elect to run for president, he could be a "transformative historical figure" who would add "dignity" to American political life.⁷² He was, like the military he embodied, "untouchable."⁷³ He stood for the nation not because the United States was figured as black but because it was figured as open-minded, as multicultural, as pluralist, and thus as having *already* successfully achieved the aims that "p.c." college professors and their students were agitating for.

Despite Powell's extraordinary status, the figuration of the United States through the sign of the multicultural military was fraught with tensions, as the military traditions of masculinity and (hetero)sexualized discipline ran up against the multicultural narrative of inclusion. One *Washington Post* report on the relationships among soldiers in a multiracial platoon offered a noteworthy glimpse into the gender and sexual exclusions of the new army and showed how heterosexual masculinity provided the narrative by which racial inclusion was effected. As one soldier explained to a reporter, there were some racial tensions among the members of his platoon, but there was also reciprocity and camaraderie. Everybody shared music and reading material, he said. "People had black literature or white literature, like *Jet* magazine, *Ebony* magazine. . . . It went around, everybody read it. . . . You got your pornography, black, white, or whatever. That went around."⁷⁴ The unmistakable presumption here was that the soldiers passing around multiracial pornography were men, and were heterosexual. Older narratives of the military as the cookstove of the melting pot were thus updated in a masculine dream of the multiracial brotherhood of sex and war.

Women were still expected to be external to the fighting, represented but not present. As one soldier's discussion with a reporter made clear, the

most popular pinup in the Gulf—a jeans-clad white woman who was, in her daily life, a policewoman—was a display that embodied both women's status as sexual objects and their putative liberation: "We are in a country [Saudi Arabia] where women are treated different than in the States, and are not as beautiful. [Her] picture is a constant reminder why we are here."⁷⁵ The sexual politics of this masculine narrative were already under siege, however. Despite real resistance on the part of the official services, it was clear that women soldiers *were* being incorporated, that the presumptions about the nature of the military and the required conditions for platoon bonding would not last forever. In fact, within a few years of the end of the war, two major Hollywood films, *Courage under Fire* (1996) and *G.I. Jane* (1997), took women in combat as their subject; both suggested that the biggest barrier to full female participation was retrograde sexism that could, in time, be overcome.

If the position of women as soldiers seemed to threaten the logic of women as pinups, the traditional function of war as a staging ground for masculinity did not entirely disappear. The extraordinary display of U.S. military technology on the television news may have helped to rescue the more traditional narrative of male power now potentially under threat from feminism, women soldiers, and American decline. As Robyn Wiegman has argued, the high-tech images of high-tech military equipment—the detailed attention to the Patriot attacks, the Scud missiles, and the "surgical" bombings that were displayed through cameras mounted on the U.S. planes—allowed the technology itself to stand for a kind of public and phallic masculinity that might once have been symbolized by the male bodies of warriors, but which was no longer (quite) available in the new military. The display produced a warrior discourse that solicited and signified male power but separated it from any specific embodiment.

But the reporting of the war also affirmed a certain type of femininity. The narratives about the Gulf echoed the family stories that had dominated coverage of the Iran hostage crisis, drawing on specifically feminized modes of discourse, in particular melodrama, which privileged personal stories of fear, suffering, and tragedy. The stories of the soldiers, their children, and their worried parents and siblings became the human drama of the conflict; these tales of hope and loss seemed to solicit a female audience. The almost equal visibility of both kinds of narration—high-tech and high drama—involved the dissolution of the stark gendered divisions of public man/private woman. These family-war stories allowed narratives coded as "feminine" to represent the nation in its public mode, even as they also served

to rearticulate masculinity as more mobile, more interior, and more "domestic" than ever before.⁷⁶

Gender presumptions were being altered as they were being reinscribed, but the heterosexual imperative remained. Gay and lesbian soldiers were conspicuously absent from the Desert Storm discourse of diversity. The policy banning lesbians or gay men from serving in the military came under attack by gay organizations as soon as the mobilization began, as a result of several stories of witch-hunts for homosexuals.⁷⁷ Gay magazines and political organizations quickly took up the cause of the "right to serve." It made sense: if the military was to be the sign of the nation, and the sign of the nation was to be multiracial and to include both men and women in uniform as its signifiers, then the exclusion of gays from the military was an exclusion from citizenship, from national representation.

This demand for military equality exposed the contradiction that lay at the heart of any vision of the nation as signified and embodied in its armed services. On the one hand, the military's self-representation as a microcosm of a pluralist American society opened the way, or even made inevitable, the claims made by gay men and by women of whatever sexual orientation that the role of the soldier as sign of the nation *required* their full participation. On the other hand, the military's traditional dependence on racial bonding forged through the ideology and rituals of heterosexual masculinity *required* a policy that excluded gay men and lesbians and severely limited the role of women. (In this context, General Powell's opposition to openly gay soldiers in the military was well known; he also opposed women serving in all-ground-combat units.)⁷⁸ The inherent tensions meant that even success would not be unproblematic for excluded groups, since the military, as an institution run on discipline and uniformity, has traditionally required something far more stringent than "assimilation" from its members. The politics of representativeness would invoke the diversity of the military, but the military would tend to demand the erasure of difference in the service of discipline.

Arab Americans were reminded of this assimilationalist imperative as the war began. News accounts often seemed fascinated by the very fact of an Arab American community. The media tracked the fact that the community itself was divided about the war, and Arab Americans in the military were the subject of quite a few human interest stories.⁷⁹ Ever since the Iran hostage crisis, Middle Eastern immigrant communities had received sporadic attention in the U.S. press. In the late 1960s, new groups of Arab and some Iranian immigrants had begun to arrive in the United States, following the 1965

change in immigration laws and especially after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, when increasing numbers of Palestinians, Iraqis, Yemenis, and others began to join the Lebanese and Syrians of earlier generations. Many of the Palestinians had been displaced by the Arab-Israeli war; others were fleeing political instability elsewhere in the region. In contrast to earlier immigrants, these new arrivals were more likely to be Muslims, more nationalist, and, after the Black Power and identity movements of the late 1960s and 1970s, more conscious of race and culture, as well as more critical and political, than previous generations. They soon began to organize. The first self-consciously political Arab American organization was founded right after the 1967 war; it was followed by many others in the 1970s. In 1980, James Abourezk, a former U.S. senator from South Dakota, founded what would soon become the largest and most effective political voice for Middle Eastern immigrants, the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), which took a determinedly mainstream and pluralist approach to challenging anti-Arab bias in American culture. In the 1980s, ADC organized a series of demonstrations, letter-writing campaigns, and call-ins to protest the virulent anti-Arab racism that was common in films and television shows. The group also protested the anti-Iranian and anti-Islamic slant of *Not without My Daughter*, since they understood quite well (and long before the Gulf War) that such sentiments were eminently transferable: the fact that Iranians are not Arabs would not alter the impact of the movie on U.S. perceptions of Arabs and Arab Americans.⁸⁰

Many Arabs in the United States felt threatened by the overall rhetoric of the Gulf War. In the conflict with Iraq, the presumption of both the U.S. government and much of the public seemed to be that after almost two decades of doubt and decline, the multicultural United States could pull together in the face of a Middle East that was clearly an outside threat. The images of Saddam Hussein in the U.S. press drew on both analogies with Hitler and the history of anti-Arab images from the 1970s and 1980s to create a composite figure of terrorism, fascism, and greed. The position was one Hussein filled particularly well, given his record of repression at home and his embrace of virtually every opportunity for confrontation. But the fact that there were Arab nations in the allied coalition, including not only Saudi Arabia and Kuwait but also Syria and Egypt, barely rippled the surface of the rhetoric; as with Vietnam, these allies were praised in press briefings and then marginalized in the debate about what the United States was actually at war to protect. In this context, Arabs and Iranians in the United States had reason to worry about their new visibility on the international stage, as well as reason to doubt their incorporation into multicul-

tural America. Despite the occasional discussion of Arab Americans in sidebars on "opinion at home," the images of the diversity and strength of U.S. armed forces simply did not include Arab Americans.

At some level, the process of constructing a "multicultural" national identity for Americans was not so much different from the earlier task of making a "white" one. The idea of a "white" nation forged from a conglomeration of Germans, Italians, Irish, Swedes, and others depended on masking differences of language, religion, and values in order to forge a new unity. This unity did not require that all its members be treated equally; in fact, it could serve precisely to deflect attention from "internal" injustices, be they class distinctions or ethnic hierarchies, as long as everyone within the group was "compensated" by the externalization of another, racialized group. Nationalism is not the same as racism, but in this instance it used a similar logic: the production of "multiculturalism" as a militarized national construct imagined a multicultural family that offered an appropriately hierarchical and yet affective tie among peoples and groups. The militarized nation needed an "outside" to mark its boundaries; that outside was the Middle East.⁸¹

As part of the trajectory of nationalist discourse, the representations of the Gulf War were indeed "postmodern" not only because of their focus on spectacle and display but also in their extension and revision of the racial logics of modern nationalism. The United States was constructed as superior and expansive—as having a right both to sovereignty over its own citizens and to hegemony in other parts of the world—precisely because the war helped to define (multicultural) America as different from, and superior to, the putatively less liberal identities of other nations, particularly those in the Middle East. But if the vision of military multiculturalism had solved the dual dilemma of decline abroad and "political correctness" at home, it had produced an aporia of its own: What would happen when America was forced to acknowledge the Arabs within?

THE SIEGE

Edward Zwick's film *The Siege* opened in November 1998, just a few weeks before President Clinton, on the day before an impeachment vote was scheduled in the House of Representatives, ordered renewed bombing of Iraq as punishment for its failure to comply with the protocols of the UN inspections established after the Gulf War. Despite the film's timely subject matter (Muslim Arab terrorists attacking New York City) and its star power (Denzel Washington and Bruce Willis), the film did not do very well, earning only \$41 million in its initial theater run (compared with the \$80 mil-

lion for *The Rugrats Movie* in approximately the same period). When it was released on video, however, *The Siege* topped the rental charts for several weeks.⁸² Initially subject to a boycott by the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, *The Siege* actually presented a view of Arabs and Arab Americans that was almost unprecedented in American movies—not because of its plot, which seemed to be a straightforward tale of terrorism-at-home, but because of the way in which it was such a definitively and self-consciously post-Gulf War film. Through its interest in visuality and surveillance, the film redeployed and commented on the type of images that were highlighted by Gulf War television coverage. Even more important, its interest in Arab Americans as an immigrant population challenged, though it did not entirely explode, the logic of military multiculturalism.

The Siege mobilizes the major elements of the action/terrorism genre to construct a distinctly liberal narrative of race and foreign policy. The basic plot elements are simple: an African American FBI counterterrorism specialist, Tony Hubbard (Denzel Washington), is faced with an escalating series of terrorist bombings in New York City. His task is to find the terrorists, who are soon revealed as Islamic fundamentalists. When, despite great bravery, he fails to end the attacks, Congress puts the city under martial law. The military commander (Bruce Willis) invades the city and rounds up Arab American males, herding them into a makeshift concentration camp at Yankee Stadium. The final part of the film is then organized around Hubbard's two key tasks: stopping the terrorists through legal and proper means, and stopping the abuse of authority represented by Willis's general and exemplified in the concentration camp.

As an action film, *The Siege* is interested in many of the same things as other (more conservative) films in the genre: the workings of technology and surveillance; the role of the media, especially television; the play of gender and sexuality; and of course the thrill of threat and the satisfaction of rescue. Also like many 1980s and 1990s action movies, *The Siege* presents, and thus posits, the multiracial makeup of military and/or police forces. Overall, though, the particular way in which this film situates itself and its audience distinguishes it from apparently similar films. For that reason, its mixed success at the box office is quite interesting, in part because of what it suggests about the promise and the limits of a more liberal version of multiculturalism at the turn of the twenty-first century.

The Siege tells its story of race, terrorism, and desire through complex layers of representation; images from television news and the surveillance operations of various security forces structure both the form and the content of the film narrative. At key moments, the act of viewing forms a cru-

cial subtext to the surface events of the film's plot. While the movie is about terrorism in New York, and secondarily about the problem of race and national identity, it is also a movie about television—particularly television news. These levels of narrative reinforce each other, drawing on the complex ways that terrorism, race, television, and the Middle East had long been linked in U.S. discourse.

The movie opens with an image of a bomb exploding and a building crumbling; the shot looks grainy, in a square frame. We hear a voice-over; Saudi Arabia is mentioned, as is a U.S. military installation. As an audience, we know from the look of the image that we are watching television news; it is likely that many viewers would also remember the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Dahran, Saudi Arabia, in 1996. Next, another fictional news broadcast talks about a suspect in the bombing, "Sheik Ahmed Bin Talal." The character of the "Sheik" suggests the bombing of New York's World Trade Center five years earlier, for which the Egyptian sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman and other several other Islamic fundamentalists living in the United States were arrested and ultimately convicted.⁸³ That connection is only underlined when, a few scenes later, a muezzin is shown offering the Muslim call to prayer from a mosque. Playing on the audience's assumption that the setting is still the Middle East, the camera slowly zooms out to reveal the streets of Brooklyn, with the Manhattan skyline in the background. The movie will return several times to this reality: Middle Eastern Muslims are no longer only in the Middle East.

What the audience sees in the film is often presented via the technologies of satellite imagery, surveillance equipment, and television. Vision mediated by technology is almost a character in this movie; television and surveillance equipment appear at key moments in the plot, enabling action and commenting on events. Unlike earlier films such as *Delta Force*, in which television news is an enemy, here television represents history and signifies truth. The film opens by soliciting its viewers with news sequences, encouraging them to think intertextually, to remember recent terrorist events through their experience of watching those events on TV. Frequent television and radio news reports punctuate the rest of the story; narrated by well-known television and radio anchors (several from National Public Radio), they invite the audience to see the film as true to life. Of course, use of news accounts within films is hardly unusual, but the sophistication of the "news" sequences and their repeated use throughout the narration gives *The Siege* a distinct self-consciousness about information. Knowledge about the techniques of viewing becomes knowledge about the security state—the threats it poses, and the threats it contains.

The security state is represented by two types of institutions. The first is the military, which, along with the CIA, is defined by its intrusiveness, its massive resources, and its ruthlessness. The other type of institution is represented by the FBI, which, as personified by Denzel Washington's Agent Hubbard, is defined by its commitment to antiterrorism, its integrity, and its relative lack of resources. In the world of the film, the FBI is both competent and human—negotiators get stuck in traffic; agents lose perpetrators; and the authority of the agency is undermined by the military takeover. The portrayal of the FBI is aided by Washington's star persona; in the Hollywood of the 1990s, he was known as a gentle, generous person, who usually played sympathetic, if sometimes flawed, characters in serious films. (Washington had also starred as a conscientious military man in the Gulf War film *Courage under Fire*, also directed by Zwick.) The humanity of the FBI is also signified by its exemplary racial diversity and its (relative) feminist consciousness. Hubbard oversees a team that includes another African American man, an Asian American woman, two white men, and an Arab American man, Frank Haddad (Tony Shalhoub).⁸⁴ The FBI is also aided by a tough, white female CIA agent (Annette Bening), whose ownership of her own sexuality is paralleled by her tough competence. She manages her Palestinian informer in part through sexual manipulation, just as she manages the FBI team in part by lying about her true identity. Bening's character is a long way from the "freely chosen submission" of the women of the biblical epics, but the film is ambivalent about her power; the film, like the FBI, needs her to do its work, but neither is quite sure what to do with her.

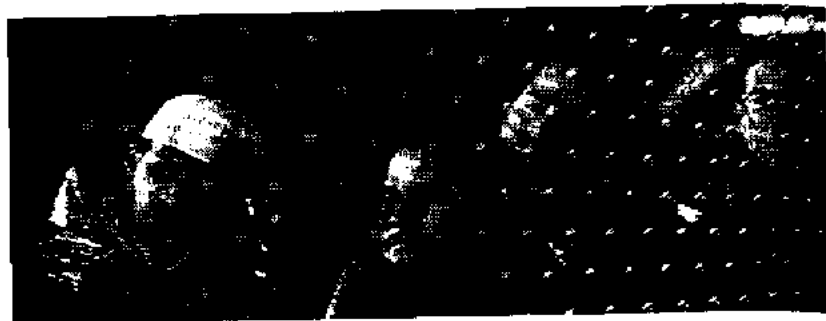
The fundamental division between security state agencies is paralleled by another division, that between Arab citizens and Arab terrorists. Although one of the interesting things about *The Siege* is its relatively sympathetic portrayal of the motivations of the bombers—Sami Bouajila gives a marvelously nuanced performance as the Muslim fundamentalist Samir—the structuring logic of the film requires a sharp distinction between those within and those outside the law. Just as the violence and authoritarianism of Willis's conniving general are paralleled and balanced by the integrity and reasonableness of Washington's Agent Hubbard, so the fanaticism and violence of Samir and the terrorists are balanced by the gentleness and humor of the law-abiding figure, that of the Arab American Agent Haddad. Frank, the number two person on the counterterrorism team, is a practicing Muslim, a U.S. citizen born in Lebanon, and a proud family man. He is located within a much larger immigrant community, people who have made the United States their home, and the film explores this community fondly and in some detail: the Arab markets and coffee shops in Brooklyn, the streets with signs in Arabic, the

mosques and community centers. But somewhere in that world, the terrorists are hiding, waiting to carry out another in the series of bombings. The terrorists are not immigrants but wayfarers, whose primary identity is with the political struggles involving the United States and Arabs in the Middle East. No one is more anxious than Haddad to catch them.

For Frank, and for the film itself, the roundup and internment of Arab Americans brings a moment of truth. Throughout *The Siege*, the immigrants in Brooklyn are represented as generally law-abiding citizens, part of the national mosaic, and their roundup is depicted as a horror. The scenes of mass arrests are punctuated with the voice-overs of a call-in radio talk show, in which some people offer racist commentary but others angrily point out the comparisons to Japanese internment in World War II and suggest that in the 1990s this could not happen to any other ethnic group in America. At the height of the crisis, Frank's thirteen-year-old son is brought to the stadium where Arab men are being held, and Frank desperately searches for him. Hubbard then goes after Frank and finds him wandering through the barbed wire, absolutely astounded that after twenty years in the United States, and ten years with the FBI, this could happen to his family. He angrily resigns from the FBI on the spot, insisting to Hubbard that he simply won't be "their sand nigger" anymore. Shortly thereafter, however, Hubbard convinces Frank to rejoin the team; the threat posed by the terrorists is simply too great, the requirements of the nation too compelling. At the end of the film, Frank and Hubbard have found and killed the last of the terrorists and have reasserted civilian control over the city. The system works.

By the time *The Siege* was released in 1998, its critique of anti-Arab racism had been enabled by nearly three decades of Arab American activism. That activism had not prevented the outrageous, cartoonish representations of Arabs in a film like *True Lies* just four years earlier, but it did allow *The Siege* to credibly posit anti-Arab sentiment as a political distortion rather than as a reflection of the nature of Arabs. The film suggested that the threat of terrorism at home could be managed by distinguishing the "immigrant" from the wayfarer, thus allowing for the reality of Arab immigration in a narrative of liberal embrace. Its focus on the presence of Arab immigrants drew on the logic of Gulf War multiculturalism but challenged its enabling assumption: that the Middle East could be fully externalized and that "Arabs" or Islam could reliably serve as one half of a moral binary, with "America" on the other side.

The Siege was a post-Gulf War film in another sense, however, in that it served less as a challenge to the discourse of U.S. global reach than as an



Figures 24 and 25. In *The Siege* (1998), Arab immigrants behind the barbed wire of a concentration camp (top), and an Arab American FBI agent, played by Tony Shalhoub, is convinced to return to the job by his boss, played by Denzel Washington.

extension and refinement of it. As much as the film refused some of the racial and nationalist assumptions of the dominant news coverage of the Gulf War, it depended on its audience to understand that issues of terrorism and media were connected to debates about U.S. power in the post-Vietnam world. And in suggesting that the Middle East and its politics profoundly infected and infiltrated the United States, the film knew what its audience knew: that, as a result of the oil crisis, terrorism, Iran, and the Gulf War, the Middle East had become a site of extensive U.S. investment, in every sense of that term.

The Siege also shared with the Gulf War coverage some fundamental fascinations: TV and surveillance; the questioning of the United States' international role after Vietnam; the love and fear of covert power; and the transformations in the role of women in the gendering of the nation-state. Most important, both the film and the news accounts were part of an increasingly self-conscious diversity in images of the nation, and both manifest the assumption (derived in part from their civil rights precursors) that

only a genuinely multicultural nation deserves world power. Indeed, as a culmination of almost fifty years of post-World War II nationalist discourse, the public narrative of the Gulf War was remarkable precisely for the way it set the terms of a debate that fused a contained racial liberalism with a confident reassertion of U.S. global power. Capturing what once had been a resistant strain of cultural politics, the Gulf War changed the face of American expansionist nationalism, not simply in the way it managed, in short order, to make a demon out of a former U.S. ally and to construct an urgent national interest in protecting the sovereignty of a faraway Middle Eastern nation, but through the extraordinary work it did in incorporating the challenge of multiculturalism into the logic of the New World Order.

78. Marita Golden, "Her Husband's Captive," *New York Times*, December 27, 1987; Maude McDaniel, "Repression in Iran," *Washington Post Book World*, September 21, 1987.

79. Carol Stocker, "Mother's Iran Ordeal Draws Fire at Home," *Boston Globe*, January 24, 1991.

80. Betty Mahmoody, *Not without My Daughter*. Further references given within the text.

81. Richard Cottam, *Iran and the United States*, 232-242; Robin Wright, *In the Name of God*, 108-153.

82. Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 170.

83. *Ibid.*, 209-231.

84. Sander Gilman, *Jew's Body*; Albert Lindemann, *Esau's Tears*.

85. Nina Easton, "Movies' Mideast Myopia: U.S. Activists and Academics Fear the Negative Stereotypes Depicted in Films Will Lead to More Hostility toward Muslims," *Los Angeles Times*, January 10, 1991. The paperback was number two on the list for February 10, 1991, and it remained in the top ten until May 19, 1991; from *New York Times*, paperback best-sellers list for each date. On sales, see Dona Munker, "Driven to Extremes," *New York Times*, September 27, 1992.

6. MILITARY MULTICULTURALISM IN THE GULF WAR AND AFTER

1. Both the "police action" in Korea (1950-1953) and the undeclared war in Vietnam (1963-1973) were larger in terms of number of troops engaged. But the intensity of the conflict with Iraq, and the fact that so much happened so quickly, meant that the concentration of U.S. troops and matériel present at any one time is unrivaled in the postwar period.

2. "While the world waited, Saddam Hussein systematically raped, pillaged, and plundered a tiny nation no threat to his own." George Bush, "The Liberation of Kuwait has Begun" (speech from the Oval Office, January 16, 1991), reprinted in *The Gulf War Reader*, ed. Micah Sifry and Christopher Cerf, 311-314.

3. George Bush, "In Defense of Saudi Arabia" (speech of August 8, 1990, announcing the deployment of troops to Saudi Arabia), reprinted in *The Gulf War Reader*, ed. Micah Sifry and Christopher Cerf, 197-199.

4. Peter Steinfels, "Armageddon: Book on Middle East Feeds Hunger for Meaning in Chaos," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 16, 1991, 10A; Charles Solomon, "Paperbacks: Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis," *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, March 10, 1991, 10.

5. Greenpeace provided the higher estimate. The lower numbers can be found in John Heidenrich, "The Gulf War: How Many Iraqis Died?" Official estimates also vary: the Defense Intelligence Agency estimated one hundred thousand Iraqis dead, plus or minus 50 percent (!). Margot Norris suggests the confusion is strategic in "Only the Guns Have Eyes."

6. Allied casualties altogether were 343 dead.

7. Nancy Gibbs, "Land That They Love," *Time*, February 11, 1991, 52-53; Dana Cloud, "Operation Desert Comfort."

8. Quoted by Michelle Kendrick, "Kicking the Vietnam Syndrome."

9. Elsa Walsh and Paul Valentine, "Thousands at D.C. Rally Decry U.S. Bombings," *Washington Post*, January 20, 1991, A27.

10. One example of this kind of Left analysis was Marcy Darnovsky, L. A. Kauffman, and Billy Robinson, "What Will This War Mean?" reprinted in *The Gulf War Reader*, ed. Micah Sifry and Christopher Cerf, 480-491.

11. On the history of media obeisance during wartime, see H. Bruce Franklin, "From Realism to Virtual Reality."

12. On CNN, see Holly Cowan Shulman, "The International Media and the Persian Gulf War," and Mimi White, "Site Unseen."

13. Tom Engelhardt, "The Gulf War as Total Television," 85.

14. Susan Jeffords discusses the public familiarity with weapons systems in "The Patriot System, Or, Managerial Heroism." See also Douglas Kellner, *Persian Gulf TV War*.

15. For an analysis of the pool reporting system and its restrictions, see Robert Fisk, "Free to Report What We're Told," and James Bennet, "How the Media Missed the Story."

16. Susan Jeffords, "Bringing the Death-World Home." It later became clear that the information and images provided by the military were themselves sometimes suspect. For example, the Bush administration's claim that in September 1990 more than 250,000 Iraqi soldiers were massed in Kuwait and perhaps preparing to strike Iraq later proved to be either a serious misreading of the satellite data or a deliberate deception: Peter Zimmerman, "Experts Look Again at Wartime Satellite Photos," *St. Petersburg Times*, September 15, 1991, 1A.

17. Mimi White, "Site Unseen," 128-134.

18. Tom Engelhardt, "The Gulf War as Total Television," 83.

19. On the yellow ribbons, George Mariscal, "In the Wake of the Gulf War."

20. Janice Castro, "All Wired and Wary: American Consumers React to War and Hard Times," *Time*, February 4, 1991, 58-59; Lewis Lord, "The War's Other Front," *U.S. News and World Report*, February 4, 1991, 54-55; Tom Engelhardt, "The Gulf War as Total Television," 92; Jim Castonguay, "Gulf War TV Super Bowl," p. 5 of 11. For a partial list of T-shirts available, see "Frightening Commodities of the Gulf War (and More!)" at <http://www.spyproducts.com/books2.html>.

21. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 9-46.

22. Evan Carton, "The Self Besieged," 42.

23. Jean Baudrillard, "The Reality Gulf," *Guardian*, January 11, 1991, cited in Christopher Norris, *Uncritical Theory*, 11-12.

24. Christopher Norris, *Uncritical Theory*, 25-26.

25. Daniel Hallin, "Images of the Vietnam and the Persian Gulf Wars in U.S. Television."

26. In February 1991, just before the start of the ground war, an ABC news poll indicated that 85 percent of whites and 48 percent of blacks in the United

States supported the war, according to a report in the *Washington Post*, February 8, 1991.

27. Tom Engelhardt, "The Gulf War as Total Television," 85.
28. AP wire story, "Freed Hostages Headed Home," *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 1990, P2; Dana Priest, "Saddam Orders the Release of All Hostages," *Washington Post*, December 7, 1990, A1.
29. Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States."
30. Robyn Wiegman, "Missiles and Melodrama," 171.
31. John Mueller argues against any particular impact of visuality on U.S. public opinion in *Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War*, 134-137.
32. Jonathan Crary, in *Techniques of the Observer*, makes the most sustained argument for this understanding of nineteenth-century visual culture. See my Introduction, this volume, 16-19.
33. Robyn Wiegman, "Missiles and Melodrama," 171-172.
34. George Will, "Literary Politics," *Newsweek*, April 22, 1991, 72. Christopher Newfield also discusses Will's column in "What Was Political Correctness?"
35. Evan Carron, "The Self Besieged." Examples of p.c. articles include Jerry Adler, Peter Prescott, and Patrick Houston, "Taking Offense," *Newsweek*, December 24, 1990; Irving Howe, "The Value of the Canon: What's Wrong with P.C.," *New Republic*, February 18, 1991, 40; Richard Bernstein, "The Rising Hegemony of the Politically Correct," *New York Times*, October 28, 1990, E1; Charles Krauthammer, "An Insidious Rejuvenation of the Old Left," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 December 1990, B5. Also published in 1990 and 1991: Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals* and Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education*.
36. John Leo's columns in *U.S. News and World Report* provide an excellent example of the conflation of various "threats" of political correctness, immigration, and multiculturalism. See, for example, "PC Follies: The Year in Review," *U.S. News and World Report*, January 27, 1992, 22; and "A Political Correctness Roundup," *U.S. News and World Report*, June 22, 1992, 29.
37. "The Victims' Revolution" was *Newsweek*; "The Thought Police" was the *Atlantic*. Both cited by Evan Carron, "The Self Besieged," 40.
38. William A. Henry III, "Upside Down in the Groves of Academe," *Time*, April 1, 1991, 66.
39. The coordination between conservative organizations on this issue is chronicled in Jean Stefancic and Richard Delgado, *No Mercy*, 109-136.
40. "We the American ... Foreign Born," report by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, September 1993, and "Current Population Reports: The Foreign-Born Population: 1994," both available at <http://www.uscensus.gov>.
41. Louis Menand makes this argument about the campus as social microcosm in "What Are Universities For? The Real Crisis on Campus Is One of Identity," *Harper's*, December 1991, 47-56. Jochen Schulte-Sasse and Linda Schulte-Sasse connect the campus crisis with the Gulf War in "War, Otherness, and Illusionary Identifications with the State."

42. Fred Siegel, "The Cult of Multiculturalism," *New Republic*, February 18, 1991, 40.
43. George Will, "Literary Politics," *Newsweek*, April 22, 1991, 72.
44. Gerald Graff discusses one example of this kind of contextualization, the work of Renaissance scholar Stephen Greenblatt, in "The Nonpolitics of PC."
45. William A. Henry III, "Upside Down in the Groves of Academe," *Time*, April 1, 1991, 67; Jerry Adler et al., "Taking Offense," *Newsweek*, December 24, 1990. See also Jeff Grabmeier, "Clashing over Political Correctness," *USA Today* magazine, November 1992, 60-61.
46. Michael Kinsley, "Hysteria over 'Political Correctness,'" *Washington Post*, May 3, 1991, A25. See also Gerald Graff, "The Nonpolitics of PC," and Meg Greenfield, "Mainstream Mania," *Newsweek*, September 30, 1991, 68.
47. Christopher Newfield, "What Was Political Correctness?" 320.
48. Rosa Ehrenreich, "What Campus Radicals? The P.C. Undergrad Is a Useful Specter," *Harpers*, December 1991, 57-61.
49. Marc Cooper, "Dum da Dum-dum: LA Beware, the Mother of All Police Departments Is Here to Serve and Protect," *Village Voice*, April 16, 1991, quoted by Abouali Farmanfarman, "Sexuality in the Gulf," 12.
50. Oscar Campomanes, "The American Soldier in Love and War" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Chicago, April 2-5, 1992). The paper developed out of chapter 3 of "American Orientalism at the Turn of the Century and Filipino Postcoloniality" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, forthcoming). See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 9-10.
51. For a discussion of the role of the reserves, see Carl Conetta and Charles Knight, *Reasonable Force*.
52. "Women Warriors: Sharing the Danger," *Newsweek*, September 10, 1990; *People*, September 10, 1990. Douglas Kellner discusses both cover stories in *Persian Gulf TV War*, 75-76.
53. American Women in Uniform, Desert Storm at <http://userpages.aug.com/captbarb/femvetsds.html>.
54. Nancy Gibbs, "Life on the Line," *Time*, February 25, 1991, 36-38; Ellen Goodman, "Desert Storm Is Busting Military's Glass Ceiling," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1991; Alain L. Sanders, "When Dad and Mom Go to War," *Time*, February 18, 1991, 69; Elaine Donnelly, "What Did You Do in the Gulf, Mommy?" *National Review*, November 18, 1991, 41-44.
55. ABC News poll, cited in Lynne Duke, "Emerging Black Anti-war Movement Rooted in Domestic Issues," *Washington Post*, February 8, 1991, A27ff. In a poll of *Ebony* readers in January 1991, 66.9 percent reported serious reservations about the deployment of U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf. Venise Berry and Kim Karloff, "Perspectives on the Persian Gulf War in Popular Black Magazines," 251. Black support for the war is also discussed in an editorial by Juan Williams, "Race and War in the Persian Gulf ... Why Are Black Leaders Trying to Divide Blacks from the American Mainstream?" *Washington Post*, January 20, 1991. Williams decries black leaders' opposition to the war and says

States supported the war, according to a report in the *Washington Post*, February 8, 1991.

27. Tom Engelhardt, "The Gulf War as Total Television," 85.
28. AP wire story, "Freed Hostages Headed Home," *Los Angeles Times*, December 10, 1990, P2; Dana Priest, "Saddam Orders the Release of All Hostages," *Washington Post*, December 7, 1990, A1.
29. Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States."
30. Robyn Wiegman, "Missiles and Melodrama," 171.
31. John Mueller argues against any particular impact of visibility on U.S. public opinion in *Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War*, 134-137.
32. Jonathan Crary, in *Techniques of the Observer*, makes the most sustained argument for this understanding of nineteenth-century visual culture. See my Introduction, this volume, 16-19.
33. Robyn Wiegman, "Missiles and Melodrama," 171-172.
34. George Will, "Literary Politics," *Newsweek*, April 22, 1991, 72. Christopher Newfield also discusses Will's column in "What Was Political Correctness?"
35. Evan Carton, "The Self Besieged." Examples of p.c. articles include Jerry Adler, Peter Prescott, and Patrick Houston, "Taking Offense," *Newsweek*, December 24, 1990; Irving Howe, "The Value of the Canon: What's Wrong with P.C.," *New Republic*, February 18, 1991, 40; Richard Bernstein, "The Rising Hegemony of the Politically Correct," *New York Times*, October 28, 1990, E1; Charles Krauthammer, "An Insidious Rejuvenation of the Old Left," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 December 1990, B5. Also published in 1990 and 1991: Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals* and Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education*.
36. John Leo's columns in *U.S. News and World Report* provide an excellent example of the conflation of various "threats" of political correctness, immigration, and multiculturalism. See, for example, "PC Follies: The Year in Review," *U.S. News and World Report*, January 27, 1992, 22; and "A Political Correctness Roundup," *U.S. News and World Report*, June 22, 1992, 29.
37. "The Victims' Revolution" was *Newsweek*; "The Thought Police" was the *Atlantic*. Both cited by Evan Carton, "The Self Besieged," 40.
38. William A. Henry III, "Upside Down in the Groves of Academe," *Time*, April 1, 1991, 66.
39. The coordination between conservative organizations on this issue is chronicled in Jean Stefancic and Richard Delgado, *No Mercy*, 109-136.
40. "We the American ... Foreign Born," report by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, September 1993, and "Current Population Reports: The Foreign-Born Population, 1994," both available at <http://www.uscensus.gov>.
41. Louis Menand makes this argument about the campus as social microcosm in "What Are Universities For? The Real Crisis on Campus Is One of Identity," *Harper's*, December 1991, 47-56. Jochen Schulte-Sasse and Linda Schulte-Sasse connect the campus crisis with the Gulf War in "War, Otherness, and Illusionary Identifications with the State."

42. Fred Siegel, "The Cult of Multiculturalism," *New Republic*, February 18, 1991, 40.
43. George Will, "Literary Politics," *Newsweek*, April 22, 1991, 72.
44. Gerald Graff discusses one example of this kind of contextualization, the work of Renaissance scholar Stephen Greenblatt, in "The Nonpolitics of PC."
45. William A. Henry III, "Upside Down in the Groves of Academe," *Time*, April 1, 1991, 67; Jerry Adler et al., "Taking Offense," *Newsweek*, December 24, 1990. See also Jeff Grabmeier, "Clashing over Political Correctness," *USA Today* magazine, November 1992, 60-61.
46. Michael Kinsley, "Hysteria over 'Political Correctness,'" *Washington Post*, May 3, 1991, A25. See also Gerald Graff, "The Nonpolitics of PC," and Meg Greenfield, "Mainstream Mania," *Newsweek*, September 30, 1991, 68.
47. Christopher Newfield, "What Was Political Correctness?" 320.
48. Rosa Ehrenreich, "What Campus Radicals? The P.C. Undergrad Is a Useful Specter," *Harpers*, December 1991, 57-61.
49. Marc Cooper, "Dum da Dum-dum: LA Beware, the Mother of All Police Departments Is Here to Serve and Protect," *Village Voice*, April 16, 1991, quoted by Abouali Farmanfarmanian, "Sexuality in the Gulf," 12.
50. Oscar Campomanes, "The American Soldier in Love and War" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Chicago, April 2-5, 1992). The paper developed out of chapter 3 of "American Orientalism at the Turn of the Century and Filipino Postcoloniality" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, forthcoming). See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 9-10.
51. For a discussion of the role of the reserves, see Carl Conetta and Charles Knight, *Reasonable Force*.
52. "Women Warriors: Sharing the Danger," *Newsweek*, September 10, 1990; *People*, September 10, 1990. Douglas Kellner discusses both cover stories in *Persian Gulf TV War*, 75-76.
53. American Women in Uniform, Desert Storm at <http://userpages.aug.com/captbarb/femvetsds.html>.
54. Nancy Gibbs, "Life on the Line," *Time*, February 25, 1991, 36-38; Ellen Goodman, "Desert Storm Is Busting Military's Glass Ceiling," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1991; Alain L. Sanders, "When Dad and Mom Go to War," *Time*, February 18, 1991, 69; Elaine Donnelly, "What Did You Do in the Gulf, Mommy?" *National Review*, November 18, 1991, 41-44.
55. ABC News poll, cited in Lynne Duke, "Emerging Black Anti-war Movement Rooted in Domestic Issues," *Washington Post*, February 8, 1991, A27ff. In a poll of *Ebony* readers in January 1991, 66.9 percent reported serious reservations about the deployment of U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf. Venise Berry and Kim Karloff, "Perspectives on the Persian Gulf War in Popular Black Magazines," 251. Black support for the war is also discussed in an editorial by Juan Williams, "Race and War in the Persian Gulf ... Why Are Black Leaders Trying to Divide Blacks from the American Mainstream?" *Washington Post*, January 20, 1991. Williams decries black leaders' opposition to the war and says

that most blacks initially supported the war. Williams's essay prompted a barrage of letters; see *Washington Post*, February 2, 1991.

56. Only one member of the Congressional Black Caucus voted to support President Bush's call for arms in the Persian Gulf. Venise Berry and Kim Karloff, "Perspectives on the Persian Gulf War in Popular Black Magazines," 250, 255.

57. "Blacks: Too Much of the Burden?" *Time*, February 4, 1991, 43; "This Time, Better Deal for Black Servicemen?" *New York Times*, February 18, 1991. (The specific reference is to the experience of African American veterans of Vietnam, who said they were subject to the racist behavior of white commanders and colleagues.) Also David Treadwell, "Some Black Veterans Find Yellow Ribbon Bittersweet," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 1991, A1ff.; and Charisse Jones, "Blacks and the Army: Why Join?" *Los Angeles Times*, January 8, 1991, A1ff.

58. Lynne Duke, "For Soldiers, Duty Checks Racial Bias," *Washington Post*, May 19, 1991, A1.

59. Jim Castonguay, "The Gulf War TV Super Bowl," p. 7 of 11. This description draws on Castonguay's extensive analysis.

60. This assessment is offered by Joe Klein, "Can Colin Powell Save America?" *Newsweek*, October 10, 1994. At the time of his retirement from the military in 1993, Powell's approval rating in a Gallup poll topped 70 percent, as reported in Edwin Diamond, Maryann Thumser, and Virginia Trioli, "Covering Powell: Is Hero Worship ... Replacing Investigative Reporting?" *National Journal*, December 4, 1993, 2902-2903.

61. Although Powell initially preferred a "containment" approach to Iraq rather than a counterattack, he went on to become fully supportive of the military operation. See Bob Woodward, *The Commanders*, 38-42.

62. Powell quoted by Dan Balz and Rich Atkinson, "Powell Vows to Isolate Iraqi Army and 'Kill It,'" *Washington Post*, January 24, 1991, A1ff.

63. Charles Lane, "The Legend of Colin Powell," *New Republic*, April 17, 1995, 20-32.

64. Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, 604.

65. Powell speaking to House Armed Service Committee, quoted in Sam Fulwood III, "To Blacks: Powell Is a Hero and a Source of Controversy," *Los Angeles Times*, February 17, 1991, A8ff.

66. Statistics cited in Sam Fulwood III, "Black Activists Urge Bush to Declare Cease-Fire," *Los Angeles Times*, February 16, 1991, A3.

67. On the "poverty draft," see Charisse Jones, "Blacks and the Army: Why Join?" *Los Angeles Times*, January 8, 1991; and Lynne Davis, "Emerging Black Anti-war Movement," *Washington Post*, February 8, 1991, A27ff. On opportunities in the military, see Leon Wynter, "Gulf War Should Boost Status of Military Blacks," *Wall Street Journal*, March 15, 1991, B1.

68. See Laura Randolph, "The Untold Story of Black Women in the Gulf War," *Ebony*, September 1991, 100-107.

69. Juan Williams, "Race and War in the Persian Gulf ... Why Are Black Leaders Trying to Divide Blacks from the American Mainstream?" *Washington Post*, January 20, 1991; Clarence Page, "The Military and Black Amer-

ica," *Wall Street Journal*, April 18, 1991, A16. The criterion for this relative privilege was, and is, acquiescence and loyalty to the institution. On Powell's role in suppressing a black-led insurrection with U.S. military units in South Korea, see Charles Lane, "The Legend of Colin Powell," *New Republic*, April 17, 1995, 28-29.

70. National Press Club president Clayton Boyce, quoted in *Washington Post*, September 30, 1933, B1ff.

71. John Ranelagh, "America's Black Eisenhower: Colin Powell, Architect of Victory," *National Review*, April 1, 1991, 26ff.

72. Richard Berke, "Waiting for the Candidate Who Can Change Everything," *New York Times*, November 5, 1995.

73. David Corn, "The Untouchable," *Nation*, October 4, 1993, 344.

74. Lynn Davis, "For Soldiers, Duty Checks Racial Bias," *Washington Post*, May 19, 1991, A1ff.

75. Abouali Farmanfarman, "Sexuality in the Gulf," 21.

76. Robyn Wiegman makes this argument in "Missiles and Melodrama." Another very useful discussion of the power of the images of military equipment and high-tech is Margot Norris, "Only the Guns Have Eyes." Nancy Armstrong compares the representation of "the family" in the Gulf War and in the "war on drugs" in "Fatal Abstraction: The Death and Sinister Afterlife of the American Family."

77. Gay-oriented newspapers reported that, in practice, many gay and lesbian soldiers were being ordered to ship out to the Gulf, even after coming out to their commanders. Rick Harding, "Commanders Quietly Ignore Anti-gay Rule to Build Gulf Forces," *Advocate*, February 26, 1991, 20-21. The final Clinton policy on gays in the military—"don't ask, don't tell"—was enacted in early 1993 after a protracted political battle.

78. Eric Schmitt, "Colin Powell, Who Led US Military into New Era, Resigns," *New York Times*, October 1, 1993, A12; Eric Schmitt, "The Top Soldier Is Torn between Two Loyalties," *New York Times*, February 6, 1993, A1.

79. Nancy Gibbs, "Walking a Tightrope," and "Arab-Americans: The Perils of Hyphenation," both in the *Economist*, January 26, 1991, 23-24; "They're Americans Too," *Sports Illustrated*, February 4, 1991, 9; Tahar Ben Jelloun, "I Am an Arab, I Am Suspect," *Nation*, April 15, 1991, 482-485. See also Therese Saliba, "Military Presences and Absences: Arab Women and the Persian Gulf War."

80. See James Abourezk, *Advise and Dissent*, 254, for his remarkably brief discussion of the founding of ADC.

81. Etienne Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism," discusses the connections of both racism and nationalism with the language of family and inheritance.

82. Internet Movie Data Base; business data for *The Siege* at <http://us.imdb.com/Business>; *Entertainment Weekly*, box office listings, December 18, 1998, 35.

83. "Four for Four," *Time*, March 14, 1994; Mary Anne Weaver, "The Trail of the Sheikh," *New Yorker*, April 12, 1993, 71-89.

84. Shalhoub had a long list of credits, including appearances in *Primary Colors* (1998), *Men in Black* (1997), and *Barton Fink* (1991), as well as numerous television appearances.

CONCLUSION

1. In this article, Kennan, a respected expert on the Soviet Union, argued that Soviet leaders were determined to consolidate and expand their power, and could be met only with determined force. Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*, 63-65.

2. Samuel Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations?" 22. This quotation is from the article version; the book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, is somewhat more circumspect in its language: "Clashes of civilizations are the greatest threat to world peace" (321); and "Relations between groups from different civilizations however will be almost never close, usually cool, and often hostile" (207).

3. Samuel Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations*, 45-47. All further references are in parentheses in the text.

4. In the article version, Huntington barely thought it necessary to acknowledge the potential of historical change. In the book, he offered this caveat: "Cultures can change, and the nature of their impact on politics and economics can vary from one period to another. Yet the major differences in political and economic development among civilizations are clearly rooted in their different cultures. . . . Islamic culture explains in large part the failure of democracy to emerge in much of the Muslim world" (29).

5. Samuel Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations?" 42.

6. Edward Said makes this point in "Bridge across the Abyss." *Al-Ahram Weekly*, September 10-16, 1998, available at <http://web.ahram.org.ed/weekly/> 1998. For a more liberal version of Huntington's basic view, see Benjamin Barber, *Jihad v. McWorld*.

7. On transnationalism and neo- and postcolonialism, see George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads*; Neil Lazarus, *Nationalism and Cultural Practice*; and Bruce Robbins, *Feeling Global*. On globalization and the export of U.S. culture, see Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels*; and Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*.

8. For a sustained argument on this point in the nineteenth century, see Ezra Tawil, "Frontier Romance, the Problem of Slavery, and the Making of Race."

9. Paul Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, 2.

10. This argument is made by several contributors to the collection, Avery Gordon and Christopher Newfield, eds., *Mapping Multiculturalism*. For an exemplary study of border crossing that does not fall into this idealizing logic, see Gayle Wald, *Crossing the Line*.

Bibliography

- Abourezk, James. *Advise and Dissent: Memoirs of South Dakota and the U.S. Senate*. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1989.
- Abraham, Sameer Y. "Detroit's Arab-American Community: A Survey of Diversity and Commonality." In *Arabs in the New World: Studies in Arab American Communities*, edited by S. Abraham and N. Abraham, 84-108.
- Abraham, Sameer, and Nabeel Abraham, eds. *The Arab World and Arab-Americans: Understanding a Neglected Minority*. Detroit: Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University, 1991.
- . *Arabs in the New World: Studies in Arab American Communities*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983.
- Acheson, Dean. *Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department*. New York: Norton, 1969.
- Albano, Captain Lou. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Pro Wrestling*. New York: Alpha Books, 1999.
- Alloula, Malek. *The Colonial Harem*. Trans. Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- Ammerman, Nancy. *Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1987.
- . "North American Protestant Fundamentalism." In *Media, Culture, and the Religious Right*, edited by Linda Kintz and Julia Lesage, 55-114.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso, 1991.
- Anderson, Jack, with J. Boyd. *Fiasco*. New York: Times Books, 1983.
- Anzovin, Steven, ed. *Terrorism*. New York: H. W. Wilson, 1986.
- Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.