

# The Democratic Peace Theory and Biopolitics

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to inquire into the hard decisions that democracies are making in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the context of working to spreading democracy and maintaining peace through foreign policy. Ever since the American-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq after the 9/11 terror attacks, democratic peace theorists have been pushed further to the sidelines as their theory has been put to the test and struggled to stand up to the challenges of political realities in contemporary world politics. The idea that the diffusion of democracy would help build a Kantian world peace would seem to have taken a severe blow with the rise of populist candidates and policies in the West in recent years. The democratic peace theory (DPT) is in crucial respects about the mechanisms to indirectly control other countries' economies and politics through forcibly installing democratic regimes. Though done in the name of safety and security for western nations, this foreign policy looks an awful lot like an attempt at biopolitical engineering. Has DPT morphed into a form of biopolitics? The goal of this thesis is to delve into this question and to learn what the implications are if this is the case, and what it means for the West, democracies, terrorism, and societies. For if democracies are less and less able to justify their role in driving the proper conditions for peace, we must scrutinize the role they play in international affairs in a much broader political perspective.

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## **General Audience Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to see, in the post-Cold War world, what kind of association that democracies have with other states around them. As the world sees more and more democracies take root, it is worth studying what kind of relationship these democracies have formed with both other democracies and non-democracies. Democratic governments have in some cases forced democracy upon parts of the world that have never sought democracy. With this in mind I will look at the spread of democracies all over the globe through the theory of biopolitics. This theory is the idea that a government must control its population, even the reproduction of it. Policies on abortion, the death penalty, and end of life laws might seem controversial to some but to a government are very necessary to ensure the safety and promotion of life in a state. If countries are forcibly spreading democracy to others countries that are not, are they trying to control a population in another place? This thesis seeks to answer that question within the context of the modern world that we live in.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1917, as he stood before both houses of Congress asking for America to become officially involved in the Great War, Woodrow Wilson made a simple and straightforward argument. The war, in his view, was being fought because of “the menace to that peace and freedom that lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people.”<sup>1</sup> He viewed it as America’s job to step in and help keep the free peoples of the world in exactly that: a state of freedom. Wilson may not have realized it at the time, but he was unknowingly advocating a theory that first started with Immanuel Kant and has continued through to the present day with theorists such as Bruce Russett and thinking espoused by politicians like George W. Bush after the 9/11 terror attacks. Namely, that democracy is the form of government which leads to peaceful interactions and relationships among the world’s nation-states. The Great War began because nations that did not endorse democracy had brought war and violence to nations that wanted peace and tranquility. Wilson would later on state that “the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve.”<sup>2</sup> In Wilson’s views and the views of many others, making the world safe meant bringing democracy to every corner of the globe.

In the modern international system, according to Russett, democracies have rarely fought each other because they have other ways of resolving differences and problems.<sup>3</sup> As a result,

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<sup>1</sup> Transcript of Joint Address to Congress Leading to a Declaration of War Against Germany (1917)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Russett, Bruce M. *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993, page 4.

they have no desire or want to fight other democracies. Henceforth, “the more democracies there are in the world, the fewer potential adversaries we and other democracies will have and the wider the zone of peace.”<sup>4</sup> Russett claims to have looked at almost 4,000 cases where a militarized dispute took place between what he terms “politically relevant dyads.” Over the forty years these cases encompass, democracies only fought at an odds of 1 in 276, while nondemocracies fought at a rate eight times as high, 1 in 36<sup>5</sup>. These numbers help support his theory that democracies, for a variety of reasons, are much less likely to have a dispute or disagreement spill over into a militarized incidence. He reasons that the modern international system, which most trace back to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, could forever be changed by the spread of democracy worldwide. “Democracy and the expectation of international peace can feed on each other to mitigate both the real and the perceived dangers of a still anarchic international system.” Democracy, in Russett’s mind, is the first real chance that peace has of fully taking hold in the late-modern world.<sup>6</sup>

There is a large literature, however, that reveals democratic peace theory as having many flaws and potential downfalls. Though it may appear at first glance from Russett’s case studies that democracies fight each other less than nondemocracies, there are several issues that scholars have identified in this theory as fairly problematic. It is easy to view the data Russett collected, see the regime-types of the countries involved, and conclude that regime-type is the leading variable that leads to peace. However, this is only scratching the surface as to why these certain types of regimes appear to lead more peaceful lives compared to non-democracies. As Karen Rasler and William Thompson state, “to focus only on the correlation between regime type and conflict behavior is tantamount to ignoring how democratic regime types emerged in the first

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 136.

place”.<sup>7</sup> One major problem identified by Rasler and Thompson is that democracies have been slow to emerge, in a historical sense. What allowed democratic regimes to be born in the first place? Does peace come out of them, or was it something else that led to the peace that allowed these regimes to occur?

Sebastian Rosato is another supporter of looking at the democratic peace theory with great suspicion and caution. An issue that Rosato broaches is the determining of what exactly constitutes a democracy in the first place. “The farther back we go in history,” he writes, “the harder it is to find a consensus among both scholars and policymakers on what states qualify as democracies.”<sup>8</sup> It is fine to say, as Russett does, that democracy is the catalyst that drives peace. What, however, is a democracy? Is it truly fair or accurate to compare the democracy that exists today in most of the world to democracy in the ancient city-states of Greece, as Russett does?

Russett defines war as “large-scale institutionally organized lethal violence” and with at least “one thousand battle fatalities.”<sup>9</sup> This definition is acceptable when strictly referring to major conflicts between nations; however, one can find that smaller fights between nations could eventually lead to war. This paper will look more at the other ways democracies fight without necessarily using the military to do so. Though it is totally understandable that Russett must use a working definition of war so he can wade through the countless number of conflicts between nations, his definition does leave out many situations and variables that could definitively be described as conflicts. Conflicts between nations or states are not strictly violent in nature. There can be economic struggles between nations when it pertains to trade or sanctions. There can be diplomatic skirmishes where ambassadors or political envoys refuse to come to the table and

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<sup>7</sup> Rasler, Karen A., and William R. Thompson. *Puzzles of the Democratic Peace: Theory, Geopolitics, and the Transformation of World Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 41.

<sup>8</sup> Rosato, Sebastian. "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 04 (2003): 600.

<sup>9</sup>Russett, 12.

negotiate on a given topic. And the biggest flaw with his working definition of a conflict between nations is his fatality minimum. Hundreds of combat deaths in a war between nations cannot and should not be overlooked. His definition of a conflict leaves much to be desired.

It may be the case, however, that supporters of DPT and others that find DPT to be lacking could both be overlooking a very important variable. Liberal, democratic governments have arguably been using, in recent years, quite undemocratic methods to help spread the liberal way of life to parts of the world that seem to neither want or understand this way of life being thrust upon them. What are the methods being used today? What are the reasons behind the actions being taken by these democratic, liberal, sovereign states? Using the works of authors such as Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, I want to take a more critical analysis of the democratic peace theory through the lens of biopolitics. The democratic peace theory has become an influential tool that policymakers in recent years have put into practice in the context of foreign policy. Democratic nations, led by the United States, have sometimes resorted to violent forms of nation-building to bring democratic norms and institutions to places that have never before had such things in the hope the result would be peaceful relations, as in Afghanistan and Iraq. I will examine this theory and the potential implications it poses for the future.

### **Democratic Peace Theory**

The natural place to begin with the history of the Democratic Peace Theory (DPT) is with Immanuel Kant. Writing in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Kant did not argue that democracy, per se, would be the catalyst to drive the new peace he strove to see in the world. His main argument was that republican governments would be the ideal form of government for peaceful relations and lasting tranquility between countries. *Perpetual Peace* differs slightly from modern democratic peace theory because representative government would help end conflict among

nations. Kant does not specifically refer to democracy in his essay as a main force behind this peace he seeks. Considering the timeframe of Kant's writing, the omission of democracy from his theory of peace becomes understandable. This would mark a stark contrast to more modern, liberal democratic theory, which would stress elections as a vital piece of any free, democratic government and society. In Kant's essay he listed six factors that should happen directly without change, and democracy is not one of them. No secret peace treaties, states cannot and may not be used as property, standing armies must cease to exist, debts should not be accrued in the name of foreign wars or affairs, states shall not meddle in others states' constitutions, and, lastly, states shall not use assassins or spies -- these are the main conditions that must be met. According to Kant, the six proposed variables would help lead to conditions that would produce a lasting peace among nations. Kant then listed his "Three Definitive Articles" which lay the foundation for a permanent peace. He wrote that countries' constitutions should be of a republican nature, that there should ultimately be a federation of free states created to protect this peace, and that universal hospitality (or a freedom of movement) shall always be allowed to citizens of this federation.<sup>10</sup>

Though Kant did not stress democracy in his essay, he did favor a separate legislative branch from its executive branch within a republican government. A key difference that is often overlooked when speaking of republics and democracies is that in a republic there is a written constitution that protects the minority and the rights of everyone. This was a key sticking point for Kant -- that written constitutions must be in place to help protect the minority. In a true democracy, everyone "wishes to be master."<sup>11</sup> Therefore, a written document is crucial to evolving into a regime-type that could help bring peace to the international system. Kant wrote

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<sup>10</sup> Kant, Immanuel. *Project for a Perpetual Peace a Philosophical Essay*. London: Printed by S. Couchman for Vernor and Hood, 1796, pages 107-114 and 120-137.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 126.

that a weakness of democratic government is that it fails to truly speak for all people. Kant claims that “here the universal will is in contradiction with itself and with the principle of freedom.”<sup>12</sup> The will of the people, with their own self-interest in mind, will lean towards peace when presented with the opportunity to go to war. Most of society recognizes that war is sometimes a necessity to help preserve peace. They will support a government going to war, but only to a point. When faced with the decision to leave their home, family, and job to fight, many people would be hesitant to do such a thing.

Russett, writing in the shadow of the fall of the Berlin Wall, claims that the post-Cold War world can be transformed by the world-wide spread of democracy. Pitting two ideologically opposed sides in the Cold War, and with democracy seemingly having prevailed, it would be logical to think that the alliances built by the USSR and US during this time would quickly fall apart. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the democratically-leaning group led by the United States, would have no real reason to be friendly anymore with the nations of the former USSR. However, Russett claims the peace that endures from these countries is not an accident. “Peace among democracies was not maintained simply by pressure from a common adversary in the Cold War, and it is outlasting that threat. The more democratic each state is, the more peaceful their relations are likely to be.”<sup>13</sup> Russett looked at all militarized disputes over a forty-year period and the evidence initially seems to support his case. When both sides in a dispute were democratic, the chance of the dispute moving to an armed conflict was extremely low, whereas if one side or both sides were nondemocratic, the chance of the situation escalating to violence was much higher. This study serves as compelling proof that Russett is on to something. Another way one can view the data Russett provides is it is not true for other types of

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 125.

<sup>13</sup> Russett, 119.

political systems. “Sharing common forms of political structure and political culture in general does not prevent war between independent states.”<sup>14</sup> This theory does not seem to cross into other political realms. Democracy would appear to be the common link in all of these potential disputes Russett included in his study. Democratic regimes have built-in restraints and slower decision-making processes that make them less likely to use violence. Having historically lived under tyrannical, authoritarian, or dictatorial rule, democratic societies desire slow and thoughtful calculation when considering going to war. Other types of regimes do not necessarily possess this cautious nature. Democracy is the catalyst which brought about peace consistently, not any other form of government.

### **Democratic Peace Theory Deficiencies**

Since the end of the Cold War, the defeat of the USSR and the fall of the Berlin Wall, this victory brought into reality a major component of bringing peace to the international system. Politicians, academics, and military officials saw the fall of the USSR as a chance for democracy to move into the places where the USSR had violently brought and enforced communism. Scholars and policymakers in the West seemed eager to seize upon this moment in history and advocated bringing democracy to places that only a few years before seemed impenetrable by external forces. But some scholars argue that democracy is not the variable that has driven the peace among nations and there are a plethora of other factors, both internal and external, that drive a peace between countries. The next section will be a brief observation at what scholars are saying is flawed with the democratic peace theory and what its shortcomings are.

Some theorists argue that looking at armed conflicts among democracies is much too narrow and misses other ways that democracies “fight” amongst themselves. Ever since Kant wrote in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the world’s economy has become more and more linked together.

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<sup>14</sup> Kant, 25.

No longer is any part of the world immune to the world economy and its reach. Heather Chingono proposes that democracies are the world's leaders in using economic sanctions against other countries. And democracies do not only use these against nondemocracies. "Economic coercion is increasingly replacing militarized conflict and democracies are no exception in using this tool against both nondemocracies and democracies," she writes.<sup>15</sup> Democracies are 24 times more likely than nondemocracies to use economic sanctions. By this reasoning it is hard to contend that democracies are not engaging in conflict with one another. Though these conflicts may not be violent in nature, "economic sanctions can create a trade war between two states and ultimately lead to autarky."<sup>16</sup>

Andris Zimelis is another scholar who is critical about the democratic peace theory. He argues that trust is an integral part of democratic societies, and a willingness to seek ways other than war to resolve problems they have with others countries. As Zimelis notes, "trust in other people constitutes an essential part of democratic regimes."<sup>17</sup> Zimelis is making the argument that the more trusting a people are, the less likely they are to choose war. He cites the example of Scandinavia, which has the highest levels of trust and no involvement in any militarized interstate disputes (MID). Countries with much lower levels of trust are involved in MID's at a much higher rate. Zimelis cautions that putting too much into the democratic peace theory may be unwise.

An additional criticism of democratic peace theory is the argument that with the modern world becoming a much smaller place, democratic peace theorists are directing its solution at the wrong level. Christopher Hobson argues that the theory is already in a sense outdated with the

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<sup>15</sup> Chingono, Heather. "The Nexus Between the Democratic Peace Theory and Economic Coercion: Why Democracies Fight Each Other?" *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 4 (2009): 65.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 65.

<sup>17</sup> Zimelis, Andris. "Trust and Normative Democratic Peace Theory: Nexus Between Citizens and Foreign Policies?" *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 32, no. 1 (2012): 24.

phenomenon of globalization currently taking root in societies all around the globe. The state, as the main focus of international relations, is changing before our very eyes. Instead of focusing on spreading democracy to a state level, we need to think of promoting democracy on a much larger level. "A Democratic Peace needs to be constructed through democracy existing at both the national and global levels. In a quite fundamental sense, the way we conceive of democracy and peace needs to be revised to adjust these to global historical forces."<sup>18</sup> Though it has been only twenty-five years since the time Russett was writing, the world has drastically changed since the end of the Cold War. Before scholars and policymakers declare the DPT the new doctrine of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a step should be taken back to make sure that democracy is the government some want to see spread all over the world.

Sebastian Rosato is another author who disagrees with the assertion that democracy causes peace. Since 1815, Rosato writes that "the world's most active democracies – Britain, France, India, Israel, and the United States – have gone to war 30 times."<sup>19</sup> This seems to go against what Russett is saying about democracies causing peace and being a good thing for the world. Rosato goes on to state that what we might be seeing is not necessarily a peace brought by democracies. What we might be seeing is a peace brought by one of those democracies – the United States. Liberal democracies have largely been kept in two regions in the world, the Americas and Western Europe. To make the assumption that by taking this form of government and applying it to other peoples with different languages, religions, cultures, and backgrounds would seem to be misguided. And perhaps the most dangerous effect of the democratic peace theory, in Rosato's view, is that the theory has jumped from the theoretical world to the real

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<sup>18</sup> Hobson, Christopher. "Towards a Critical Theory of Democratic Peace." *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 04 (2011): 1903-922. doi:10.1017/S0260210510001634. (1921): page 1921.

<sup>19</sup> Rosato, Sebastian. "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 04 (2003). doi:10.1017/S0003055403000893, 595.

world with policymakers adopting DPT. If this turns out to be the case, “then American policymakers are expending valuable resources on a policy that, while morally praiseworthy, does not make America more secure.”<sup>20</sup> A clear example of what Rosato is talking about is the American military intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan in the early 2000’s. Recently, American generals who served in Iraq such as Paul Casey, Stanley McChrystal, and Anthony Zinni have all stated they are not sure what gains or positive results America and the West have gotten from invading Iraq or Afghanistan. Zinni is quoted as saying that “the trouble is the way they (the U.S. Pentagon) saw to go about this is unilateral aggressive intervention by the United States - the take down of Iraq as a priority. And what we have become now in the United States, how we're viewed in this region is not an entity that's promising positive change. We are now being viewed as the modern crusaders, as the modern colonial power in this part of the world.”<sup>21</sup> Iraq, which had never attacked the United States before the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, has become so chaotic and dangerous that conditions there have led to the creation of terror groups that are now calling for attacks to be carried out against the United States – and their capability to carry out these attacks is potentially growing by the day.

### **Biopolitics and Liberal Modernity**

Biopolitics is a word that has several definitions. It means different things to different people and different things to different fields of study. For the sake of this thesis, biopolitics will be defined as the different ways that states manage and control populations. The ways that states control individuals and the reasons and methodology for doing so will be explained in more detail in chapter three. Power will be a vital part of this definition for biopolitics and what it entails. For now, this simple definition will suffice.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 600.

<sup>21</sup> Leung, Rebecca. "Gen. Zinni: 'They've Screwed Up'." *CBS News*. CBS Interactive, 24 May 2004. Web. 18 Feb. 2014.

In “*The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*,” French political philosopher Michel Foucault discusses a broad range of topics that deal with sex and the individual’s sexuality in order to explain the interest that government has in controlling its population. Foucault looks at sex, among other things, in terms of truth, repression, law, and war because the way a government handles the reproduction and use of its population in terms of the military, economy, and labor force are things that a government must concern itself with. This book on sexuality would at first glance seem to be just that – a book on the history of sexuality. But by the end of the book, Foucault delves into the topic of war and the role power plays in war. The more one reads into Foucault he seems to be coming back to one main point: power. Power is what connects both sexuality and war. The power over another person’s body, the right to life, and the way that person will live their life are just a couple of the ways in which power manifests itself. Therefore, what role should the government have in this? How much power should people give up and cede to the government?

“*The Birth of Biopolitics*” serves as the launching point of the connection that governments must have with respect to regulating the population it claims control over. Foucault makes the argument that the wrong questions are being asked when it comes to government rule and laws the government enact. Instead of asking if an act or policy is legitimate or illegitimate, we should be asking what kind of outcome this action will provide. In other words, whether or not it will be successful or has failed the people. If government action only helps the population that government oversees, then the utility of that action cannot really be put into question. Foucault goes on to probe into the liberal experiment that broke out in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in the West. The French Revolution and the success of the American colonists seem to start a movement of liberal democracies across much of Europe and parts of the Americas. For

Foucault, though, he does not use the word ‘liberal’ to describe a certain type of freedom or specific form of government. He uses the word to describe a government that consumes freedom. But Foucault is quick to point out that this freedom has some responsibility and restrictions that go along with having freedom. Namely, the government must control certain things so it can consume this freedom that he speaks of. He cites the example of free trade and asks the following question: “There must be free trade, of course, but how can we practice free trade in fact if we do not control and limit a number of things, and if we do not organize a series of preventative measures to avoid the effects of one country’s hegemony over others, which would be precisely the limitation and restriction of free trade?”<sup>22</sup> Specifically when speaking of sex, Foucault notes that “sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing to be administered.”<sup>23</sup> Sex was not simply judged from a purely social standpoint. It was something that needed to have laws and guidelines so sex could be a beneficial act for society. Government has a natural interest in things such as free trade, sex, and the education of its people. Without the government taking an interest in these things and monitoring them, free trade wouldn’t exist, the population may not strike a good balance between male and females and old and young, and without educating its population countries may not have a proper labor force with the required skills necessary to independently support themselves. Foucault seemingly claims that the debate should not be over the helpfulness of government action from a purely political perspective, but rather the utility or practical usefulness of such action. A government has a keen interest in the success of its population, for without that population the government does not exist.

Julian Reid’s “*The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity, and the Defence of Logistical Societies*,” written in 2006, explores the forms of life which are

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<sup>22</sup> Foucault, Michel, and Michel Senellart. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1978-79*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pg 64.

<sup>23</sup> Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. London: Penguin, 1992, pg 24.

possible under liberal regimes and the role that terrorism plays in this formation. There are several different forms of life Reid writes about: logistical life, nomadic life, defiant life, circulatory life, and lastly biopolitical life. All of these are discussed under the close eye of the new Global War on Terror. War, peace, discipline, and even architecture are discussed to try and explain what biopolitics and biopower is. Though liberal rule is often equated with personal liberties and freedoms, these governments are inherently concerned with organizing its laws so as to prod its citizenry to act a certain, productive way. Foucault writes that “wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on the behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital.”<sup>24</sup> How liberal, modern regimes interact and manage its people is a crucial concept to the security and freedom of its citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The first form of life that Reid creates to critique the relationship between freedom and liberalism is logistical life. Liberal-modern regimes have a need, like most societies, to have some of kind of order and discipline over their sovereign people in order to have control. For Reid, though, this type of organization all comes back to preparing for war. “The forms of society that liberal regimes and their proponents proclaim as peaceful are better understood as logistical orders, in which life is subjected to principles deriving from the organizational needs of those regimes for increased efficiency in preparation for war.”<sup>25</sup> Reid claims many liberal regimes of today are in a constant readiness of war and that this is how these societies are run. This may at first seem to be contradictory because the one thing that liberal societies are known for is peace. As Reid states later on in the chapter, however, “liberal regimes, while adept at

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<sup>24</sup> Foucault, 137.

<sup>25</sup> Reid, Julian. *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity, and the Defence of Logistical Societies*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2006, pg 18.

pacifying populations within their own midst, have simultaneously proved very able mobilizing the same populations for the activity of war.”<sup>26</sup> This logistical form of life may seem contradictory for a “peaceful” society, but at the same time it may also be a very necessary condition for a people. To stay in this peaceful condition society must be willing to violently defend anything that threatens the freedom of the liberal regime.

The next form of life that Reid discusses is the concept of the nomadic life. In terms of the so-called Global War on Terror, this might be the most interesting concept. How should societies deal with movement and space? Security is obviously a hot-button issue today in liberal societies. Although these societies are allegedly free and private rights are protected, how far should these governments go in dealing with terrorists and their activities? “Power has never been so unlimited in its unleashing of the nomadic flows of deterritorialization and the expression of their wars of movement against it.”<sup>27</sup> Terrorism could definitely fall under this category of nomadic life as terrorists are not connected with a sovereign nation and are constantly on the move. Globalization and the modern world economy is certainly a part of nomadic life as well. With people on the move all the time, governments must come up with creative ways to control its population. With countries such as the United States and others trying to export democracy around the world, these democratic regimes must understand that certain regions and peoples are going to fight back against this perceived aggression when trying to install a democratic regime. Democratic peace theorists do not seem to realize that a certain segment of society will most assuredly always fall outside the management of the government and is willing to strike back in a sometimes violent manner. In a cruel twist, this nomadic life is maybe the cause – though also an effect -- of spreading democracy around the world.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 46.

Not to lessen the impact of the other forms of life that Reid writes about, but worth mentioning here are what he terms defiant life, circulatory life, and biopolitical life. Defiant life seems very pertinent to terrorism in the West today, as terrorists are defying what liberal regimes would like to force them to do. Talking about forcing different types of people to communicate although they refuse to do so, Reid writes that “. . . terror responds by attempting to reclaim their secrecy and obscurity as strategy. The integrity of this Terror . . . is to be located in its attempt to defend life against the life-governing techniques of liberal regimes.”<sup>28</sup> Circulatory life refers to the continuation between peace and war and the force that this has on terrorism. “Rather than thinking of the event of 9/11 as the first act in a new era of a war between liberal regimes and their outside, we can better think of it as a culminating act in an older war against these architectural techniques for the control of the life of their populations.”<sup>29</sup> Lastly the biopolitical form of life encompasses the “the contestation of the seizure of power and subjection of life itself.”<sup>30</sup> It is the way that governments rule over their population and control them is what biopolitics refers to. What is possibly most interesting in this War on Terror is how liberal regimes plan on trying to control other populations that are not sovereign to them. Much like with nomadic life, these other forms of life have spawned a newfound effort, especially in the West, to outsource democracy and her institutions to places that have previously never had elections or a real rule of law. What this has done in many cases has actually been the opposite, as U.S.-led efforts to bring democracy to a place like Iraq has helped create a new threat, ISIS, that now has the United States back in the Middle East. Is bringing democracy to places in the Middle East going to make the U.S. and others in the West truly safer? Only time will tell, but early indications make that statement look unclear to say the least.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 86.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 117.

Dillon and Reid, in *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live*, offer a unique perspective of the relationship that liberal societies and governments have with war, in that liberal government and peoples have a somewhat ironic relationship with war. Though peace may be the prevailing attitude and effect of liberal societies, these same liberal societies also seem to be extremely proficient at organizing and mobilizing their populations into becoming war-ready. One must only look at the current Global War on Terror and the liberal, democratic societies that are at the forefront of this movement. Dillon and Reid cite the fiasco that the Iraq War has had on the United States, the United Kingdom, and Iraq itself. This war, which U.S. President George W. Bush claimed was being waged to bring democracy and modernization to the Iraqi people, economy, and government, had instead brought “an increased terrorist threat, the elevation of Iran into the region’s most powerful state.....and is contributing to the greatest financial crisis since the 1930’s.”<sup>31</sup> Clearly, the art of bringing democracy that some had never experienced nor potentially wanted had not exactly turned out to be as easy or profitable as President Bush wanted. This “liberal way of war”, Dillon and Reid write, “practiced in the last 15 years has helped bring liberalism’s global hegemony to the point of collapse.”<sup>32</sup> The idea that spreading democracy to all corners of the globe will lead to peace may not be desirable after all.

Liberal rule, according to Dillon and Reid, should not only be concerned with providing safety and good governance to a people. Liberal rule “must continuously sort life into categories of living beings which contribute to or detract from the promotion of life.”<sup>33</sup> Liberal rule must be concerned with the promotion of life that is productive to the liberal way of rule. If liberal regimes do not actively manage or oversee the preservation of its people, then it cannot be

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<sup>31</sup> Dillon, Michael, and Julian Reid. *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live*. London: Routledge, 2009, pg 10-11.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 87.

surprised when the very people they are overseeing do not comply or understand the customs and culture of the liberal life. This might seem somewhat contradictory, for liberal rule is characterized by privacy, freedom for the way you live, and government not controlling your every move. However, the authors make a compelling case that sometimes life can create experiences which are hostile to the way that you live. In a liberal society, it is ultimately up to the government to “decide, implicitly or explicitly, whom to correct and whom to punish, as well as who shall live and who shall die, what life-forms will be promoted and which will be terminated.”<sup>34</sup> Liberal rule, in this context, must concern itself with the lives that it creates, for its very survival is dependent on creating life that will thrive and promote liberal rule. They must generate a citizenry that is actively involved in the day-to-day affairs of the government. They must produce a citizenry that lives for the state, and not just for themselves. The lives that liberal rule build and create must also be monitored closely. This detrimental life that Dillon and Reid speak of can act out in a violent manner against the majority of the people in a society. This could happen when a segment of the populace does not feel as if their beliefs or interests are being respected or represented. As Dillon writes, “this biopolitics of security revolves around the governance of the contingency that attends all the dangers that arise from the very ways in which the circuits of species life locally and globally function with increasing pace, unpredictability, and density of connectivity.”<sup>35</sup> Countries, ethnicities, religions, and cultures that before rarely had contact now have contact much more frequently than even just a century ago. The modern world has been hugely beneficial to millions of people around the globe but has also brought on new problems for liberal regimes that in the past have not been there. Not everyone that is a part

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 87.

<sup>35</sup> Dillon, Michael. "Governing Terror: The State of Emergency of Biopolitical Emergence." *International Political Sociology* 1 (2007): 9.

of this new, hyper-globalized world wants to be in it, so liberal regimes must be responsive and aware of the parts in their societies that may violently act out against it.

One way that governments have begun to monitor their populations is by tracking the movement of people. Modern technology has assisted the government in making this task much easier. The field of biometrics lets governments track movements by checking peoples “electronic fingerprints, facial and gait recognition, and iris scans” to help identify any threats to the population at-large.<sup>36</sup> Science and law, some would argue, will be able to help solve the problem of rogue bodies out to harm or commit violent acts against the liberal regime.<sup>37</sup> The field of biometrics could help alleviate the practice of racial discrimination and racial profiling against certain groups. Though biometrics will definitely not solve all of the issues that liberal regimes face in terms of security, they do offer a beginning to keeping the population safe and secure. Democratic peace theorists can say all they want that spreading democracy all over the world will promote peace in the international system. But what they must also understand is that democracies also need to take care of themselves and their own internal security before they can begin exporting democracy all over the globe.

Additionally, liberal rule and governance must also deal with is the fact that, as Dillon and Reid point out, the current terror that threatens liberal regimes is somewhat a consequence of its own success as a regime-type. What sets liberal regimes apart from other regimes are their infrastructures and abilities to circulate people, goods, and information across vast areas so quickly and smoothly. The issue, however, is that terror networks and their members are a *part* of the same societies that have a liberal and democratic government. “Water, fuel, banking and

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<sup>36</sup> Amoore, Louise. "Biometric Borders: Governing Mobilities in the War on Terror." *Political Geography* 25, no. 3 (2006): 342.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 348.

finance, air transportation, sea transportation, port security, agriculture, and food”<sup>38</sup> have been just a few of the areas that liberal regimes have sought to protect from attack and destruction. “Were liberal regimes to govern differently, such tactics of Terror simply would not be effective.” In other words, the reason that liberal regimes are being targeted is because they simply *are* liberal regimes. The very things that make them so successful and unique from other regimes are the very things that could also attack and bring it down. This idea would appear to be both paradoxical and detrimental to the very idea and sustainability of the liberal experiment. The next section will begin to take a deeper look into this idea and how it may impact liberalism and the democratic peace theory.

### **Democratic Peace Theory and Liberal Modernity**

The DPT constitutes an intriguing set of concepts about national dispositions toward peace versus war. Ever since the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States the democratic peace theory has seemingly become the de facto foreign policy for the West. Spreading democratic values, free-market principles, and human rights has become the main concern of those fighting the Global War on Terror. As President Bush stated in a speech from September of 2003 to the American public about the war in Iraq and the War on Terror more generally, “we are helping the long-suffering people of that country (Iraq) to build a decent and democratic society at the center of the Middle East. Together, we are transforming a place of torture chambers and mass graves into a nation of laws and free institutions. The undertaking is difficult and costly – yet worthy of our country, and critical to our security.”<sup>39</sup> Making Iraq a functioning democracy and bringing it into the world economy would, in Bush’s eyes, make America safer from another

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<sup>38</sup>Dillon and Reid, 137.

<sup>39</sup>Bremer, L. Paul., and Malcolm McConnell. *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope*. New York: Threshold Editions, 2006, pg 157.

9/11 event. World leaders like Bush and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair have put the democratic peace theory into action in places like Afghanistan and Iraq within the last fifteen years. It is for this reason that the democratic peace theory must be put under more scrutiny. Simply taking this idea at face value is intellectually lazy and a disservice to the people involved in carrying out the policy and who it impacts. If this academic concept argues that a form of government is deemed more peaceful over others and is then applied to a real-world situation, logic would dictate that the idea first be given much thought and studied deeply to understand what consequences might come out of it. Simply put, is the democratic peace theory just another instrument of biopolitics? I believe the argument can be made that the democracy we know in the liberal, modern age, is just as likely as other forms of government to go to war and use violence to realize political goals. Current critics of the democratic peace theory are not necessarily wrong in their disapproval of the idea. I simply feel that in this hyper-globalized world, state-on-state violence rarely happens, no matter the type of state involved. This fact might tell us that governments do not go to war because they are democracies, liberal, or free, but because they do not have an interest in going to war in the first place.

In the age of the Cold War, when democracy and communism were the main focal point of most states, the DPT had much more ground to stand on. In fact, with the fall of the Soviet Union and communism in the late 1980's, state-on-state warfare has practically ceased to exist as democracy has now spread to a good part of the globe since the end of World War II. With the spread of democracy has come a system that is characterized by capitalism, human rights, and connectivity among the world's people never seen before. The state, so important in the old system, has been marginalized and lost some of its luster. Mary Kaldor quotes from Robert Cooper, who stated that 1989 brought on a new "postmodern system. Postmodern states are

states that are no longer governed by the territorial imperative. They are embedded in an international framework, in which the distinction between domestic and international has been eroded, where borders matter less, where there is mutual interference and surveillance in domestic affairs, where force is prohibited, and where security is based on transparency, mutual openness, interdependence, and mutual vulnerability.”<sup>40</sup> We have transitioned from the Treaty of Westphalia being the foundation for our system to multinational corporations and nongovernmental organizations being the basis for this postmodern world. It is because of this fact that using the DPT is potentially misleading. Democracies, just like communist countries, dictators, monarchies, or any other type of government, have certain interests and objectives. Sometimes, as Foucault has noted, to secure something like free trade one might think a war or conflict can help them. I will delve into this idea in much more detail in chapter three.

The spread of democracy in the years since the end of the Great War, and especially since World War II, has brought a prosperity and peace that has perhaps never before been seen in the modern state system. There is much evidence to back up the assertion that democracy has been the driving force of this peace. But as we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and are seeing the breakdown of the state system, there is also ample evidence to suggest that democracy may not be the instrument of peace as some would promote. Moving forward, democratic peace theory proponents must be wary of touting the effectiveness of DPT too much. Until this is done, the jury will remain out on the spread of democracy bringing peace to the world.

There will be three additional chapters to this thesis: a chapter on the democratic peace theory, a chapter on liberal modernity and biopolitics, and ending with a concluding chapter. I will begin the second chapter with a look at definitions for what the democratic peace theory is. This second chapter will take a more critical look at the democratic peace theory and the

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<sup>40</sup> Kaldor, Mary. *Global Civil Society: An Answer to War*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2003, 137.

critiques of it. I will present the proponents of the theory and their arguments as to what makes it valid and why governments should adopt it as policy. I will then proceed to clarify the opinions of those who think the democratic peace theory is fundamentally flawed and that policymakers should be wary of adopting it as official doctrine. In concluding this chapter, I would like to see what role globalization has played on the importance of states and how this might affect the theory. With NGO's and multinational corporations playing a bigger role in international affairs and relations, I have a feeling that globalization is starting to tear down the walls between countries and also diminish the importance of the state itself.

Chapter three will take a look at the role liberal modernity, biopower, and biopolitics play in the Global War on Terror. Then I would like to analyze the different forms of life that Julian Reid writes of and how governments must learn to control them and what obstacles they bring to liberal governance. How do governments control populations that are free but are also threats to the system in which they live? How does a government determine who should live and die, especially in the liberal, modern systems that are starting to spread all over the globe? I would then like to see what role the current Global War on Terror plays in liberal governance and what the purpose of this war is.

My last section will be an attempt to bring together the two main designs of this thesis: the democratic peace theory, biopolitics and liberal modernity. I will include in this chapter conclusions drawn from my previous chapters about the relationship and influence that the DPT and liberal modernity have on one another. Policymakers and political leaders say that spreading democracy all over the globe will bring peace and prosperity to the international system. But what if the democratic peace theory is simply another way for governments to control people? Is this theory just another example of biopolitics, whereby governments and leaders are actually

acting in an undemocratic manner by controlling populations, albeit for their own benefit? What kind of power should people cede to the government so that their basic needs can be met? How does democracy help citizens meet this goal? These are the types of questions I will seek to help bring clarity to in the last chapter. The democratic peace theory and biopolitics are two premises that have not necessarily been critically considered in light of each other. My hope is that this thesis will bring some clarity to the stakes involved in such a deliberation.

## Chapter 2

### The Democratic Peace Theory

#### Introduction

In his Inaugural Address following his swearing-in ceremony for his second term in January of 2005, President Bush stood before an estimated 100,000 people and explained the threat and danger that America faced. He vowed that "for as long as whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny -- prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder -- violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat." This oppression and despotism that President Bush described in his address could only be cured by one thing: democracy. "We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in the entire world. America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one."<sup>41</sup> Bush may not have necessarily been advocating the Democratic Peace Theory, but he definitely was espousing the main principals of the theory. The DPT is a theory that posits that extending democracy to as much of the world as possible would bring peace to the international system as we know it today. Democracies are peaceful by nature and do not fight one another, so logic would then dictate by diffusing democracy, peace would follow. With the fall of communism, the end of the Cold War, and the current Global War on Terror, the DPT has taken center-stage in the foreign policies of the governments of the West. Military conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan highlight the efforts of Western governments to try and bring stability and peace to the peoples of these regions, but also just as importantly their own people. This is what President Bush was attempting to convey to

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<sup>41</sup> "Bush Pledges to Spread Democracy." CNN. January 20, 2005. Accessed September 14, 2014. <http://www.cnn.com/2005/ALLPOLITICS/01/20/bush.speech/>.

the American public that cold day in January over ten years ago: to nullify the danger, threat, and menace terrorists and dictators are, the fight must be taken to them to help keep the American citizenry safe. This fight must also include bringing democracy to these places that pose a risk to America and the West at-large, so the danger these places pose will no longer exist. There are many proponents of this theory as well as many detractors. But before we get to the many differing opinions on this theory, we will start with the person who is generally credited with coming up with the idea behind the democratic peace.

### **Kant and *Perpetual Peace***

Writing in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the author that many point to as the founder of the idea for a permanent peace actually had very little to say about democracy. The German political philosopher Immanuel Kant was not advocating that a democratic system would help bring stability to the international system. Kant states that two certain conditions that must be met: one must remove the negative conditions and make positive conditions to help spread peace. To a present-day theorist this may seem a huge submission from this theory to leave out the democratic system. However, if one puts this writing in a historical context than this makes much more sense. The United States had a very young democracy that no one was certain would last and the idea of a liberal, democratic government had not taken hold yet in Europe. The six negative conditions that must be reversed so peace can take hold dealt with no secret wars, there could be no buying or selling of a state, no standing armies, no national debt should be accrued in the name of any external affair, no state shall violently interfere with another, and no state shall use spies on another.<sup>42</sup> Once these conditions were met, the positive conditions then must be put into place. Kant referred to these as “definitive articles.” Firstly, each state must be

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<sup>42</sup> Kant, Immanuel. *Project for a Perpetual Peace a Philosophical Essay*. London: Printed by S. Couchman for Vernor and Hood, 1796.

republican in nature. Secondly, a federation of free states shall be made. And lastly, that all people must be given the right to free movement from one state to the next. Democracy, for Kant, is just not something you must have to bring peace between states. In fact, if anything, Kant was skeptical of democracy itself and it truly being able to represent the people. He writes that “in a democratic constitution . . . every one wishes to be master.”<sup>43</sup> If everyone is out to try and undermine the authority by a ruler by themselves trying to become one, how could this type of system truly ever represent the people? He goes on to say that, “the kind of government, however, is of infinitely more importance to the people than the kind of constitution.”<sup>44</sup> At the end of the day, it does not necessarily matter what is written on paper. Governments routinely ignore the very things that are meant to curb their power and maintain the rights of the people. For Kant, action would seem to matter more than words. Does the government do the right things to promote peace? Or does it simply pay lip service to them?

A fair question to ask then is why is *Perpetual Peace* used as a foundation for the modern DPT? The preliminary articles that Kant lays out are principles that many modern-day proponents of the DPT say liberal democracies advocate in their search for peace. Spying on fellow nations, not fighting secret wars, and no standing armies are things that many liberal democracies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century espouse as the core of their being and are enshrined in their written constitutions. But if one takes a closer look at his definitive articles than I think you get a better idea of why DPT advocates look at *Perpetual Peace* as a guiding document. Though Kant says that republican governments are a must for peace and fails to mention democracy specifically, the general idea is one and the same. Many liberal democracies today have separate legislatures from their executive branches and this is exactly the scenario that Kant had in mind.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 126.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 127.

As long as the body that makes the laws is not connected to the body that carries those laws out, the people have a real chance to be heard.

His second premise of a federation of free states is something that we are currently living in today. With the advent of the United Nations after World War II, states were attempting to create a place where conflicts and disagreements could be hashed out so they were not instead settled on the field of battle. His notion of giving people the right to free movement from one state to the next is also an idea that one can see in something like the Schengen Area within the European Union, where a passport is not needed to move from one country to another. Kant states that it is “common right of possession on the surface of the earth on which, as it is a globe, we cannot be infinitely scattered, and must in the reconcile ourselves to existence side by side: at the same time, originally not one individual had more right than another to live in any one particular spot.”<sup>45</sup> Giving citizens the right to freely move about should only help bring them together, not keep them apart. Letting people travel and to see with their own eyes the lands of a different people or an enemy should actually help to lessen the misunderstandings and misapprehension one state has towards another. Shutting down the right to movement only exacerbates the problems that so many times leads states into war. These themes that Kant writes of almost 225 years ago are the groundwork today of much of the world that is still all these years later searching for the long-lasting peace Kant was determined to help make.

### **Russett and the DPT**

From the end of World War II to when the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990's, the international relations system was defined by the struggle between democracy and communism. Once communism ceased to exist as a viable system of government the whole system was turned on its head. As Bruce Russett writes, “the old bases for evaluating the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 138.

character of international relations had collapsed.”<sup>46</sup> One could no longer paint the system as those siding with democracy and those with communism. The West with their cultural and political might had, with their victory over communism in the Cold War, drastically changed the system. Democracy was now creeping into places of the world and slowly becoming a dominant institution. What did this mean for the system at-large? Would something replace communism in opposing democracy? Bruce Russett takes a critical and important look into these and other questions in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Russett is one of the first and loudest to advocate that spreading democracy will lead to peace being the dominant feature of the international structure. For a variety of reasons, Russett argues that specific things about democracies lead to peace. It is by no accident that the peace the world has seen since the fall of communism has been because democracy has become the prevailing form of government for a majority of the world. “It seems likely,” Russett says, “that the reasons for ‘democratic peace’ are either rooted somehow in the nature of democracy itself, or are correlated in the modern world with the phenomenon of democracy.”<sup>47</sup> We will now turn to the arguments Russett has as to why democracy has caused peace to take root in the world as never seen before.

The first bit of evidence that Russett turns to in presenting his case that peace is caused by the spread of democracy is by taking a closer look into what he terms “dispute behavior” between “relevant dyads.” As mentioned previously in the introduction, Russett looked at a forty-year period between 1946 and 1986. Though even he admits that the sample size is small, his findings are quite remarkable. Dyads refers simply to a “pair of states,”<sup>48</sup> and “politically relevant dyads” denotes “all pairs of states that are contiguous or at least fairly close to each

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<sup>46</sup> Russett, Bruce M. *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993, page 4.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

other, or where one of the states in the pair is a major power and hence has military ‘global reach’.”<sup>49</sup> Russett found that non-democracies were eight times more likely to go to war compared to when both sides were democratic. There must be something about democracies internally that restrains them from going to war and using violence. “The rarity of lethal violence between democracies is not due to any apparent confounding influence, but to something in the nature of the democratic-to-democratic state relationship itself, and then begin to identify what that is,” Russett writes.<sup>50</sup>

One of the institutional and structural norms that Russett touches on is that democracies resolve their disputes through the ballot boxes. In a democracy people can voice their opinions and feelings when they vote or contact a member of the government that represents them. To put this another way, Russett writes that “those who claim the principle of self-determination for themselves are expected to extend it to others.”<sup>51</sup> So the argument goes that democracies have no reason to be fearful of an attack by another democracy because they share the same type of belief system. A key point to make here is that democracies will be involved in wars; it’s just that they will not be involved with wars with other democracies. Nondemocracies do not share the same norms and customs that democracies do when it comes to projecting their type of power towards other countries and governments. So when a conflict arises between a democracy and a nondemocracy, “it will not expect the nondemocratic state to be restrained by those norms.”<sup>52</sup>

To continue this argument that internal restraints will prevent democracies from fighting other democracies, Russett cites the fact that leaders in democratic systems must garner broad support from its people before going to war. In many nondemocratic forms of governments,

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 33.

people do not have either the option to join the military or when that military will be called upon to fight in a war. But democratically-controlled people can have a say when a country goes to war, so leaders must be aware of the public's opinion. "Popular support in a democracy can be built by rhetoric and exhortation, but not readily compelled."<sup>53</sup> The public opinion may eventually build to a level where the country might go to war, but it will not be a quick process emphasized by the lack of discussion about the decision itself. This also blends itself into the next constraint highlighted by Russett, which is the level of internal violence or conflict within democratic societies. Democracies are also much more peaceful when it comes to resolving their internal conflicts when compared to nondemocracies. Because of the things mentioned like elections, avenues to voice discontent, and the value of public opinion to elected officials, democracies have a strikingly lower chance of internal violence and chaos than do nondemocracies. Russett states "that a democracy rarely needs to use force to resolve conflicts; order can be maintained without violent suppression."<sup>54</sup> This then leads to democracies using the same norms and limitations it has internally to its relationship with other countries, international organizations, and the like.

For all the arguments that Russett makes for the benefits and values that spreading democratic peace would bring to the international system, maybe the strongest point to be made is that policymakers at the end of the Cold War were starting to adopt democratic peace theory doctrines and principles in their rhetoric and policies. In April of 1992, speaking in the aftermath of the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russett quotes President George H.W. Bush that "a democratic Russia is the best guarantee against a renewed danger of competition and the threat

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 81.

of nuclear rivalry.”<sup>55</sup> As part of President George W. Bush’s freedom agenda, he hoped to spread liberty and hope “as an alternative to the enemy’s ideology of repression and fear.”<sup>56</sup> President Obama, speaking in Estonia in September of 2014, said that “we’re stronger because we’re democracies. We’re not afraid of free and fair elections, because true legitimacy can only come from one source -- and that is the people. We’re not afraid of an independent judiciary, because no one is above the law. We’re not afraid of a free press or vibrant debate or a strong civil society, because leaders must be held accountable. We’re not afraid to let our young people go online to learn and discover and organize, because we know that countries are more successful when citizens are free to think for themselves.”<sup>57</sup> For better or for worse, this very doctrine that Russett so strongly believes will help make a positive change in the international system has made the leap from academic idea to being put into motion in real-life situations and scenarios. “Theory,” Russett writes, “immediately became relevant to policy.”<sup>58</sup> Policymakers, military leaders, and politicians seem to be using and adapting the standard and idea that spreading democratic peace would bring peace and be beneficial to all countries, states, nations, and people of the world.

### **Democratic Peace Theory Dissenters**

There is a wealth of literature, however, that says states and political leaders put too much emphasis on democracy in the role it plays in spreading peace. Among them are Karen Rasler and William Thompson, who argue not that the democratic peace theory is necessarily wrong, but in fact might simply be in the wrong order. Instead of democracy forging a new peace

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 129.

<sup>56</sup> Bush, George W. *Decision Points*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2010, page 397.

<sup>57</sup> "President Obama Addresses the People of Estonia." White House. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/09/03/we-are-stronger-because-we-are-democracies-president-obama-addresses-people-estonia>.

<sup>58</sup> Russett, 126.

for the world, Rasler and Thompson posit that democracy might instead be spreading *because* of a peace that has been brought upon the world by something else. As Rasler and Thompson write, the democratic peace we are familiar with today was “underwritten by a dynamic system leader that facilitated and fostered the emergence of democratic political systems.”<sup>59</sup> This statement, especially in a post-Cold War world, carries much weight. The United States has emerged in the last twenty-five years as the lone superpower in terms of its economy, military, and political system. The lack of any major conflict occurring since the end of World War II could be attributed to a monadic system that has one major power, the United States, able to quell any state-on-state violence in that time period. A plethora of democracies have arisen since the fall of the Soviet Union, especially in Eastern Europe. What allowed these countries to develop democratic systems? Though one could say that the European Union or NATO may have pushed democracy on them, it is also just as likely that a “zone of relative peace may have been critical to the emergence of democratic regimes.”<sup>60</sup> These Eastern European countries at the end of the Cold War were willing to turn to anything other than communism. The United States, the clear leader of NATO, had in a way created a system where they were able to exert strong and decisive influence over smaller, weaker states, whatever their regime type. Was democracy necessarily the driver of this peace? Though it clearly played a role in the development of a peace in Eastern Europe, the military and political superiority of the United States had just as much to do with it as well. For without the defeat of the Soviet Union, a zone of peace never materializes to allow democracy to take hold.

To think that democracy is the main variable that is pushing a new tranquility among the international system has many potential problems that go along with it. What is democracy? Do

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<sup>59</sup> Rasler, Karen A., and William R. Thompson. *Puzzles of the Democratic Peace: Theory, Geopolitics, and the Transformation of World Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pg 18.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

other variables exist that cloud the analysis of what role democracy has played in the spread of peace? Though many countries today call themselves democracies, how many are truly free and full democracies? What makes up a conflict between two different regimes or countries? The rest of the chapter will attempt to uncover some of the downfalls and shortcomings of the democratic peace theory.

One of the sharpest criticisms of current democratic peace theory from an academic perspective is that the theory is advocated by academics, theorists, and politicians who currently live in and work inside democracies. Democratic peace theorists live in the very type of democracies they are seeking to export all over the world and bump up against the very subjects living in these democracies. It is totally understandable, albeit accidental and even unintentional, to become biased or show partiality to democracy simply because one lives in and operates under this system. It is by no fault of their own, but democratic peace theorists cannot undo where they live or what kind of government they have grown up and been raised in. In the natural sciences a scientist would never dream of putting themselves *inside* the experiment. One would simply observe and draw conclusions from what they have seen. As Hobson notes, “studying Democratic Peace unavoidably involves a different interaction between subject and object, compared to the natural sciences that positivism seeks to emulate.”<sup>61</sup> Though advocates of the democratic peace theory are clearly not paid agents of democratic governments attempting to sell their brand to the world, there is an inherent predisposition for people living inside liberal democracies to believe that this form of government is one that would lead to worldwide peace. Another point to make inside this larger critique of the theorists themselves are the implications that come out of the theory advocating for the spread of a specific type of government but

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<sup>61</sup> Hobson, Christopher. "Towards a Critical Theory of Democratic Peace." *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 04 (2011): 1907.

stopping short of saying how this should happen. This lets people with certain motivations in the political world to take this theory and twist it to fit whatever their beliefs might be. “Democratic wars and civilizing missions in the name of democracy”<sup>62</sup> are just two examples of how this theory can be misused and misinterpreted. Theorists must understand that since the end of the Cold War their theory has made the leap from academic idea to political reality. Though it is no fault of their own how the world interprets and then uses their theory, theorists do need to be aware of the responsibility they garner for how this hypothesis can be taken. This statement should not be read that democratic peace theorists and their advocates should be blamed or caused things like the American invasion of Iraq or the very undemocratic behavior of democratic governments in the name of safety and protection. But the proponents of the democratic peace theory shoulder at least a small liability for consequences, even if unintended.

Potentially the strongest argument that the democratic peace theory is invalid is that, simply, democracies have in the past two centuries gone to war with each other. Though this somewhat simplistic argument seems to get lost in the shuffle because two *major* democratic states have not necessarily gone to war with each other, the general point still stands as being in the affirmative. One only needs to look back at the Cold War and the military interventions that the United States, the model most democratic peace theorists point to as a liberal democracy, involved itself in with fellow democratic regimes. Sebastian Rosato counts at least seven democratic governments that the United States had at least an indirect part in planning or financing military operations against.<sup>63</sup> In each of the cases Rosato looks at the United States was attempting to undermine a regime that was democratically-elected but Washington feared was moving towards a relationship with someone that the U.S. did not want to see: the Soviet

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 1909.

<sup>63</sup> Rosato, Sebastian. "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 04 (2003). doi:10.1017/S0003055403000893, pg 590.

Union. In each of these instances, the United States forsook the institutional norms that Russett and others claim that democracies have in place to prevent themselves from fighting democracies. Negotiation, trust in other democracies, and an open, public discussion about using military force never took place in any of these examples. Rosato goes on to state that “American public officials, that is, the individuals that democratic peace theory claims are most likely to abide by liberal norms, showed no respect for fellow democracies.”<sup>64</sup> A theory such as the one of democratic peace is one that must hold true in all circumstances. For this premise to be held up as an example of what a new international system could be based off of is clearly premature, for democracies, as history shows, fight other democracies.

To continue this train of thought, one can also make the argument that non-democracies “fought much less during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the industrial age, than they did in earlier times.”<sup>65</sup> This idea that there could be an economic factor in bringing peace among nations is one we will come back to shortly. Even a non-democratic society, which does not have the domestic restraints a democracy does to hold it back from going to war, can have an outside factor put natural pressure on it to not use its military to solve all of its problems. Democracies have suspiciously started to appear on the world stage in the last two hundred years or so, which is when the Industrial Revolution began to firmly take root and shaped the modern economy and society.<sup>66</sup> This point tends to reinforce the view that instead of democracy bringing peace, maybe something else led to the peace that in turn led to democracy.

Not only would it seem some democracies like the U.S. do not respect or trust some democracies, it would appear the definition of democracy has either been misunderstood or

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 591.

<sup>65</sup> Gat, Azar. "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity." *World Politics* 58, no. 1 (2005): 86.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 86.

misrepresented in attempting to spread democracy to the rest of the world. It could be that the advocates for the democratic peace theory are arguing that mature, stable, and established democracies are ones that have the institutions and internal restraints to hold back from fighting one another. Though it is fair to say that the number of democracies has risen since the end of the Cold War, many of them have the label of “illiberal democracies, precisely because they lack the very underpinnings that make democracies averse to war, including governmental transparency, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for civil and human rights.”<sup>67</sup> As Zimelis notes, “citizens of the new democratic countries in Eastern Europe lived under non-democratic regimes for decades; therefore, it is going to take time for these people to alter their perceptions and attitudes.”<sup>68</sup> It is naïve to think that simply spreading democracy to nations will automatically make them easier to trust. Though this might be the case over time, trust will at least at the start not be what prevents countries from fighting one another. Something else likely at the onset of a country becoming democratic allowed the people the means of gaining the trust of other countries that have older and more recognized institutions. Illiberal democracies make up a good chunk of the democracies and governments that now inhabit the world. According to Freedom House, “a troubling number of large, economically powerful, or regionally influential countries moved backward: Russia, Venezuela, Egypt, Turkey, Thailand, Nigeria, Kenya, and Azerbaijan. Hungary, a European Union member state, also saw a sharp slide in its democratic standards as part of a process that began in 2010.”<sup>69</sup> Contrary to what the theory states, the realization is that democracy is not bringing peace or freedom to nations or societies. All of the countries mentioned above have only recently in the past 50-75 years had democracy brought to them and

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<sup>67</sup> Encarnacion, Omar G. "Bush and the Theory of Democratic Peace." *Global Dialogue* 8, no. 3-4, page 63.

<sup>68</sup> Zimelis, Andris. "Trust and Normative Democratic Peace Theory: Nexus Between Citizens and Foreign Policies?" *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 32, no. 1 (2012): 24.

<sup>69</sup> *Freedom House Discarding Democracy: Return to the Iron Fist*. Publication. Accessed February 2, 2015. [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/01152015\\_FIW\\_2015\\_final.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/01152015_FIW_2015_final.pdf).

established. These countries, though a small sample, are representative of a wider issue among democracies all over the world. In 2014 almost twice as many countries, 61 to 33, suffered a decline in democratic ideals compared to those that registered gains.<sup>70</sup> This simple and straightforward assessment of the amount of freedoms in so-called democracies is showing that although the overall number of democracies might have increased since the end of World War II and the Cold War, the level of freedoms inside those democracies is not necessarily coming through and trickling down to the people. The democratic peace theory states that spreading democracy all over the world will bring peace and freedom to individuals in repressed countries. This may not necessarily be what is actually happening when democracy is installed as a governmental institution for a nation.

A major variable that the democratic peace theory omits is an economic factor that plays a large role in the peace that many people would attribute to democracy. Many of the world's leading democracies also have some of the world's largest and most successful economies. As Weisiger and Gartzke write, "the greater opportunity costs generated when violence disrupts economic activity and the decreasing economic utility of conquest, we see good reason to think that a more economically developed world might be a more peaceful one, especially once we consider the ways in which developed states appear to manage the international system to limit conflict."<sup>71</sup> With the role that globalization now plays in the politics, economics, and cultural landscape of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it can be extremely easy to overlook the role that this interdependence plays in the relations between nations. To state that democracies do not "fight" one another is an extremely vague statement that leaves out many ways democracies engage in

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Weisiger, Alex, and Erik Gartzke. "Debating the Democratic Peace in the International System." *International Studies Quarterly* 60.3 (2016): 578-85. Web.

conflict with one another. Clearly a military conflict is what most scholars would argue democracies are able to avoid more so than non-democracies. But do they avoid conflicts solely because they are democracies? Or can this be attributed to the fact that most of these democracies have economies that have never been so linked and dependent on the success of others? Quite simply, “war between trading partners is bad for business.”<sup>72</sup> The consequences of fighting a war with a country when so much of your wealth and economic success hinges on peace with that country is a huge part why they maintain healthy relations with other countries. The liberal democracies that serve as the cornerstone of this theory – namely America and Western Europe – are wary of bringing upon themselves militarized conflicts with certain parts of the globe simply because of the economics that are involved. Other times, though, when economics do not play such an important part, these liberal democracies seemingly have little problem with using military force in bringing democracy and human rights to countries. One must look no further than China and the recent escapades by America and Britain into Iraq and Afghanistan. China, the largest communist country in the world, also has one of the worst human rights records in the world. Yet America and the rest of the liberal democracies are leery of using military force against China to bring any kind of change to China’s political structure and institutions. They are apprehensive to do this because the “U.S. stands to benefit more economically from a cordial relationship with the rising giant.”<sup>73</sup> Though it is clear the United States and others would like to extend their philosophies and government institutions to others, they are not willing to do so because modern economies are too fragile and reliant on places like China to risk anything that could damage their close economic connections. One only needs to look at the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 to see what role the

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<sup>72</sup> Chingono, Heather. "The Nexus Between the Democratic Peace Theory and Economic Coercion: Why Democracies Fight Each Other?" *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 4 (2009): 65.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 70.

economies play in the decision of where democracy should be introduced. Afghanistan and Iraq, by Western standards, have human rights records that are atrocious. Though neither country had the capabilities or means of attacking the United States or any other western government directly, the dubious connections they had to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, DC was enough cause for the U.S. to bring democracy to these Southwest Asian countries. But what seems to get overlooked by many is that the risk factors for these invasions and the consequences of them are far less than compared to a country like China. Though Iraq had some infrastructure and other institutions in place, Afghanistan was a nation with little government, communications systems, political culture, or anything else in place. The United States and the rest of the West had little trade with either country and therefore would not be damaged economically by forcibly bringing democracy these two places. China, Iraq, and Afghanistan all have deplorable reports of treating their citizenry with respect and the rule of law. So why not bring liberal, democratic institutions to Afghanistan and Iraq, but not China? The common denominator is economic ties that bind or do not bind these nations together. When liberal democracies have a vested interest in keeping genial friendships with countries that do not share their political structures, they will choose to look the other way when dealing with non-democracies that they have a vested economic interest with. The peace that is between nations like America and China, Vietnam, Russia, and Nigeria have nothing to do with shared democratic norms. The bottom line is peace prevails between these countries because they do not dare cause a panic among its population with war for the sheer sake of spreading democracy.

### **Conclusion**

There is no denying that the spread of democracy has changed the international system and dramatically altered the way that nations and people behave. Tracing roots all the way back

to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, political theorists have advocated that spreading a specific form of governance, democracy, would help lower the risk of wars between nations and states. Strictly in a historical sense this notion of a democratic peace did not have much traction early on simply because the number of democracies in the world was so small. But with the era of European colonialism dead and the Cold War finished, democracies have multiplied in large numbers in recent years. Though it still may be too early to tell if a true democratic peace has set in, scholars like Bruce Russett have loudly championed that spreading democracy throughout the world will go a long way toward a lasting, real peace among nations and peoples. The early results are promising, though much more work and study must take place to see the ramifications of a true, widespread democratic peace.

On the flip side of this argument of a peace brought on by democracy are many who say that there are other variables that play a role in what a lasting peace could look like. Certainly economics plays a part, as countries look out for their businesses and profits. Going to war for moral or territorial reasons will take a backseat to keeping a trading partner and domestic companies content. The very people that are pushing this idea of spreading democracy to keep the relations peaceful among nations are themselves living inside democracies, which would appear to create an unintended bias among advocates. Democracies are still relatively new to the world stage as a form of government, which could tell us that there is something else that is letting democracies grow and multiply over the globe. And potentially the most damning piece of evidence against the democratic peace theory is the various and multiple examples of democracies going to war. Though they tend to fight non-democracies, there is ample data to conclude that it is not uncommon for a democracy to attack a fellow democracy. There is also much disagreement over what exactly makes up a democracy and how relevant some of the

examples Russett uses from democracy in ancient Greece to democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The fact that so many democracies today are considered illiberal or not totally free is another cause for concern. What is the point in a country having elections if those elections are rigged and do not truly represent the will of the people? What is the point in bringing democracy to a people who truly do not want it and resent the attempt to democratize them? I hear the proponents of the democratic peace theory and want to so badly believe that what they proclaim is true. But the reality seems to be the opposite, that spreading democracy to parts of the world by the West is actually something else and much darker. Spreading democracy has many unintended consequences that democratic peace theorists seem to not want to bring to light or are unaware they are there. Chapter three will begin to look into the topic that might be more closely related to democratic peace theory than thought: biopolitics.

## Chapter 3

### The Matter of Biopolitics

Our last chapter looked at the democratic peace theory and its proponents and opponents. The DPT gained steam in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989. As most of the Soviet bloc shed communism the West sought to take advantage of this movement by attempting to spread democracy to former communist countries. DPT supporters cite research that says democracies never fight one another, which is why we in the West should be actively spreading the basic tenets of liberal democracy to as much of the world as possible. Challengers to this notion argue that Western democracies have in fact been some of the most involved when it comes to warfare and also spend a large portion of their budgets on the military. We will now turn to the idea of biopolitics and what role this theory might play in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and when it comes to diffusing or not diffusing democracy abroad. The democratic peace theory by itself does not do much to help explain the relationship between violence, warfare, and democracy in the modern world. But looked at through the lens of biopolitics we can begin to understand the relationship between liberal societies and terror from both an internal and external perspective.

#### How Did We Get Here?

On October 26, 2001, just six weeks after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress passed the “Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001.” Commonly known as the Patriot Act, this bill gave the United States government exceptional powers in surveilling and monitoring the actions of the ordinary American citizen.<sup>74</sup> Sneak and peek warrants, roving wiretaps, wider access to financial records, and even the ability to see what books are checked out from the library were

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<sup>74</sup> "USA PATRIOT Act." *USA PATRIOT Act*. Department of Justice, 29 July 2013. Web. 20 Mar. 2017.

just some of the new ways that the government could track citizens and their movements.<sup>75</sup> This action taken by the American government in the aftermath of the nation's worst terrorist attack almost perfectly fits into the idea that politics has become a matter of biological necessity. People after the attacks were openly wondering what kind of power the government should have in order to maintain security of the country. How much personal freedom was one willing to give up for the safety of the country? What kind of controls will the government place on people? Many Americans were looking for security after the attacks and willingly handed over access to private details of their lives in the name of safety and clamored for the government to crack down on citizens, immigrants, and others who were not successfully assimilating into American society.<sup>76</sup> Though many observers wondered aloud about why the American government was allowed to act so "undemocratically" in a time of national uncertainty about the country's future, what many failed to see was that the federal government in the United States was actually attempting to give citizens additional freedom through more control and intervention. Title Six of the bill authorizes the government to pay any public safety officials' families within 30 days of that official's death due to a terrorist attack. The government also increased the money for border security to help keep Americans safe from any terrorist crossing our border.<sup>77</sup> However, as contradictory as this next statement seems, the ultimate goal of the government was to "win the battle" when it came to controlling the American population and outsiders which sought to bring fear to it, which was probably one of the main objectives of the terrorists and al-Qaeda.<sup>78</sup> The United States, seemingly the beacon for all liberal democracies in the world, was ostensibly

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<sup>75</sup> "Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Gallup, Inc. "Public Little Concerned About Patriot Act." *Gallup.com*. Gallup News Service, 09 Sept. 2003. Web. 21 Mar. 2017.

<sup>77</sup> USA Patriot Act, Title 4 and 6.

<sup>78</sup> "National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States." *Great Seal of the United States*. United States Government, 21 Aug. 2004. Web. 21 Mar. 2017.

cracking down on the freedoms and rights that made it the beacon for all democracies worldwide. The tools that Congress gave the government in 2001 were aimed at monitoring those foreigners that wanted to bring doubt and panic to the American way of life.

Biopolitics is the way that a population is organized and watched over by a government, such that the basic idea of life is made a primary concern of the government. This action carried out by the American administration after 9/11, and its utility as a deterrent of an open society against the threat of terrorism, is what will concern us in this chapter.

The goal of this chapter is to help bring to light and explore the meaning of what may be at stake here when politics develops biological capabilities. Made famous by the French political philosopher Michel Foucault in the 1970's, this idea has become much discussed of late regarding what role the government has in helping to keep citizens safe from acts of terrorist violence. When is an action of a government justified? When is an action useful and when does it crossover into a harmful act? How does a government regulate the human body in terms of bettering society and keeping people safe? Biopolitics is a concept that deploys an analytic, a critique that endeavors to foster a deeper understanding of this relationship between the governor and the governed. The narrative that Americans have inalienable rights that cannot be taken away by the government, then, is at best a deceptive one. Clearly there was a segment of the American populace that saw the post-9/11 world as one that needed the government to step in and be heavily involved in their lives. Whether it was through heightened security at airports, wiretaps, more scrutiny of immigrants, or a closer look at bank accounts, Americans, by supporting and accepting the Patriot Act and a more activist government in so many different aspects of citizens' lives, were acknowledging what Foucault establishes in this theory of

biopolitics: that a government must be actively involved in the security, planning, and even reproduction of its peoples in late-modern times.

I will look at biopolitics in this chapter through the lens of the Global War on Terror, roughly starting with the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States. I will first start with Foucault and examine this concept through an application of the dynamic of governance biopolitics helps us grasp – especially within the context of war, sexuality, economics, and the power of the state over its people through the way it governs. We will then move to a more recent examination on biopolitics by looking at the works of Julian Reid and Michael Dillon in *The Liberal Way of War* and *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror*, two theorists who have wrestled with the notion of biopolitics in the framework of a post-9/11 Global War on Terror. The basic argument of biopolitics is that governments must categorize life in order to maintain as well as extend control over society. Governments, these theorists contend, must competently establish the proper behaviors for its society to follow in order for the well-being of people as a whole to be established. People that do not fit neatly into this system are the ones that lash out against it, sometimes violently. We will then end the chapter by glimpsing the association that biopolitics has to the current Global War on Terror more than fifteen years after the 9/11 attacks in America.

### **Michel Foucault and Biopolitics**

Foucault's "*The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*," is a book that covers a broad range of topics that deal with the historical idea of sexuality in the context of a number of developments associated with the emergence of capitalism, the accommodation of state power to new forms of economic activity, and the new role accorded the church in modern society. Foucault looks at sexual practices, norms, and rules in terms of truth, repression, law, and war in order to see how gender and reproduction influenced the economy and the relationship between a

population and its governing body. Foucault is concerned with sexuality because up through the 17<sup>th</sup> century sex was ostensibly something that was never to be discussed or talked about. Sigmund Freud, the late-19<sup>th</sup> century and early-20<sup>th</sup> century philosopher and psychologist, was one of the first to write about sex in a straight-forward way that had not happened often before. But though Freud broached the topic about sex and wrote about such things as bestiality, puberty, and other sexual urges, Foucault appears to want to take the next step in regards to the public discussion of sex and people's sexuality. He is particularly concerned with sex and its relationship to power. A specific example of this would be marriage. "The sex of husband and wife was beset by rules and recommendations. The marriage relation was the most intense focus of constraints; it was spoken of more than anything else; more than any other relation, it was required to give a detailed accounting of itself."<sup>79</sup> The church was most concerned with regulating sex between married couples, but also of making sure that sex only happened within the limits of a marriage and not outside of it. The Church for centuries has used the confession as the tool to pry from individuals their most cherished and treasured secrets. Foucault writes that "our civilization . . . is the only civilization to have developed over the centuries procedures for telling the truth of sex which are geared to a form of knowledge-power strictly opposed to the art of initiations and the masterful secret: I have in mind the confession."<sup>80</sup> Through the confession the church could wield power over sex that practically no other institution or law could. By making people speak about their sexuality and sex lives from behind closed doors, the church was trying to force its followers to verbally divulge their actions and thoughts. "We demand that sex speak the truth, and we demand that it tell us our truth, or rather, the deeply buried truth of

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<sup>79</sup> Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. New York: Vintage, 1990, page 37.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 58.

that truth about ourselves which we think possesses in our immediate consciousness.”<sup>81</sup> The church’s power, in this case, does not necessarily manifest itself in the sex between a married couple. It shows itself in the truths that the married couple confront about their sex life in revealing their sex life to the church.

Once the Industrial Revolution started to take root in society, governments needed to educate, train, and insert people into jobs and roles that had never existed before in such an extensive manner. Family roles and dynamics were changing and sex was one of the social tenets that was changing along with society. But by the end of the book Foucault is not nearly as concerned with sexuality as he was in the beginning, but instead turns to a discussion of war. War clearly has played a major role in the relationship between a population and its government but also between and among populations themselves. Security and war is one of the crucial missions that a government carries out. How a government administers this great power, though, over its citizens, and organizing them into a fighting force when need be, is paramount to the survival of a people. This then begs the question: how does one link sexuality and war? The more one reads into Foucault he always seems to be coming back to a significant point: the relationship between power and the subject. Power is what connects both sexuality and war in that we regulate sexuality and wage war for the purpose of promoting life for the survival of the species. “The right which was formulated as the ‘power of life and death’ was in reality the right to *take* life or *let* live.”<sup>82</sup> The power over another person’s body, the right to life, and the way that person will live their life are just a couple of the ways in which power reveals itself in sexuality and through war. How the government harnesses this power and then uses it is what concerns us here. Though many Western democracies have citizens’ rights enshrined in their constitutions

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 69.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 136.

and laws, these same citizens must also confront the reality that monitoring sexuality, and conducting war, is a must for their government. Foucault would be concerned with war in the modern age as warfare today is changing almost as quickly as social customs are. Traditional tactics of fighting has changed as well as who the enemy is at least as it is concerned from a western perspective. Certain segments of the population are arguably using violent tactics against liberal societies to show their displeasure at the power these governments and societies have over them. The power, or lack of power, that these individuals have in how the government monitors their actions is what leads them to violently act out against their rule.

### **Biopolitics and Sexuality**

The first example worth taking a closer look at is why sexuality should even be a public issue. As Foucault notes, “sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing to be administered.”<sup>83</sup> Why is sex something that should be a government’s problem? At the surface it would appear it should not be, as privacy laws and regulations are fairly common throughout the West to protect one’s personal life. But beneath the surface there are some compelling arguments. In terms of a country’s economic and political power, it became very important somewhere in the eighteenth century for governments to start monitoring their populations and analyzing different aspects of it as well. With the advent of the industrial revolution and the rapid growth of cities, governments had to quickly cope with the straining of existing public services and the struggle of managing new services too. Women and children were also entering the work force in numbers never seen before. For the first time governments had to cope with a changing family dynamic as well as a ballooning work force. “Population as wealth, population as manpower or labor capacity, population balanced between its own growth and the resources it

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 24.

commanded<sup>84</sup>,” are the economic and political problems that must be dealt with. And considering that the industrial revolution was starting to take effect during this timeframe, it is no wonder that governments and private industry took a keen interest in sex. In talking about the growth of an economy and capitalism, Foucault argues that the development of said economy is not possible, “without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes.”<sup>85</sup> Would it be better for the economy if children entered the work force or instead went to school, where they would theoretically get more job skills for future employment? Free market advocates all the time vouch that a government should be “hands off” of an economy and never get involved with it. What these people fail to realize or see is that for an economy to truly thrive the government has to help set parameters and rules that everyone must abide by. The government cannot sit on the sidelines and simply be an observer; it must be actively involved in helping to create an environment where workers and owners can thrive together. When left to its own devices, the market has shown that it will sacrifice safe working conditions, health standards, and fair pay to help improve their own bottom lines. The business world has in many cases forced the governments hand in creating legislation or policy to make trade, pay, and working conditions safe and fair for consumers and workers. They have shown that left to their own devices they cannot safely and competently govern themselves.

### **Biopolitics and the Church**

Another institution which wielded the great power over people and in terms of their sexuality was the church, of course. The Catholic Church in particular had the ability through confession to monitor the behavior of their members. “One confesses one’s crimes, one’s sins,

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 141.

one's thoughts and desires, one's illnesses and troubles; one goes about telling, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell."<sup>86</sup> Foucault goes on to say, "it is in the confession that truth and sex are joined, through the obligatory and exhaustive expression of an individual secret. But this time it is truth that serves as a medium for sex and its manifestations."<sup>87</sup>

Confession helped cleanse one's soul. By forcing people to verbalize their thoughts you forced them to look deep inside and tell their darkest and most kept secrets. To stay with the institution of the church, one can also look at marriage as another way that people were controlled. By encouraging people to make their heterosexual relationship public and official in front of the church and God, the church could make sure that it would always have a mechanism to keep its membership up: marriage. By sanctifying a sexual relationship between a man and a woman, the church in this sense even has power over people. Divorce and adultery, like marriage, are also closely monitored by the church as well. Looking at these examples, sex is something that is always on the mind and has always been on the mind of the church.

As Foucault moves to war by the end of his book, many readers were confused as to what the relationship between sexuality and war. The fact that power is evident in both war and sex is a main connection between the two subjects of the book. The fact that both have to do with the body, life, and death, and control over these makes them much more similar than dissimilar. This power shows itself in that people tend to rule themselves when it comes to sexuality and war. Through confessions within the church and governments legislating and normalizing certain sexual relations over another, liberal rule "operates through complex and continuously developing forms of truth-telling."<sup>88</sup> Governments and the church have gotten their populations

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>88</sup> Dillon, Michael, and Julian Reid. *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live*. London: Routledge, 2009, page 38.

to self-govern themselves to a certain extent. Through things like the Ten Commandments and tithing, the church has gotten their followers to behave a certain way and help to fund the projects and missions of the church. This self-governance is apparent in war in that nations are able to get their citizenry not only to support a war but also able to willingly, in some cases, be willing to fight in wars as well. The existence of a people and the survival of the people in large part depends on a government's ability to monitor the sexuality of its people and their effectiveness in pursuing war. One could say that war and sexuality would not be possible without the existence and success of the other.

### **Biopolitics and Warfare**

Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz famously noted once that, “war is the continuation of politics by other means.”<sup>89</sup> One could easily say the same thing about sex. One can point to a litany of laws that governments all over the world have passed that deal with regulating and monitoring sex between people. From abortion laws to gay marriage to government tax credits for people that have children are examples of how governments encourage or prohibit certain types of sex. People in the West often times point to their personal freedoms when it comes to how they live their lives. Sex is clearly related to the freedoms people in liberal societies enjoy. Who you choose to procreate with, whether or not you even choose to have children, and what you choose to do behind closed doors would be a few parts to those rights. But when it comes monitoring a population's healthy reproduction of itself governments have clearly taken a strong interest in being involved in this process. This is where we rely so heavily on Foucault – until his theory of biopolitics in the 1970's, government action on its populations' biology had never before been studied or discussed at length.

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<sup>89</sup> "Online Library of Liberty." *Clausewitz: War as Politics by Other Means - Online Library of Liberty*. Online Library of Liberty, 13 Apr. 2016. Web. 01 Apr. 2017.

When Foucault states that genocide is the “dream of modern powers,” he is saying that this is so ambiguous because “power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population.”<sup>90</sup> In other words, he is saying that power is in essence helping to control a person’s or population’s capacity to reproduce and continue on as a people, state, or nation. And in this case genocide would obviously threaten both reproduction and survival of the species. At the risk of making a very obvious statement, war is powerful because it includes the chance that humans will lose their lives on the battlefield as well as fight and kill for something bigger than themselves. But at the same time war can also be used as a means of controlling the population, hence the example of genocide that Foucault used previously. What better way of containing a population than taking the very lives of people that were protesting or challenging an authority? Even the threat of genocide can coerce people into behaving how you’d like them to. This sounds very familiar with church and marriage and the role that it plays in driving a certain behavior from a certain population. On the flip side, though, power can be useful in getting a population to be productive when it comes to the economy, war, education, and yes, sexuality. Through sexuality the state is able to let a population flourish and be productive so that the population may survive and continue to prosper. In the modern state, it has become more than mere survival. It is now about having power over sustaining life instead of taking it away. “The setting up, in the course of classical age, of this great bipolar technology – anatomic and biological, individualizing and specifying, directed toward the performances of the body, with attention to the process of life – characterized a power whose highest function was perhaps no longer to kill, but to invest life through and through.”<sup>91</sup> Maybe war and sexuality

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<sup>90</sup> Foucault, 161.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 139.

have much more in common than previously thought, as neither are wholly about either making or taking life, but a combination of the two.

A crucial quote from Foucault nicely sums up the relationship between these ideas. “Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere.”<sup>92</sup> The old adage that we cannot define something but we know it when we see it fits in rather nicely as a means of understanding that power can mean different things to different people. Although there are many different definitions of what power is, we all know power when we see it. Sexuality and warfare can both be stripped down to the power of one party to decide life of another. And for better or for worse, the existence of human beings can in many ways be boiled down to sex and war and the way in which humans struggle for power over themselves and others. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, though, this takes on a new meaning in the current War on Terror being waged by much of the West. Societies have always deemed it necessary to manage the safety of its citizens by locking up violent offenders and those who steal property of others. But when it has come to war historically, war has often been aimed at another people or population. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century this adage has been turned upside down on itself. Populations find that they are fighting *themselves*. With terrorist groups and organizations using the very freedoms that the West enjoys to carry out attacks against them, Western governments have begun to formulate policies to control their populations in the name of safety. It is in these policies where sex and war collide in the fight against terror. For the first time in the post-Industrial Age world governments are not just controlling their populations for strictly economic purposes. They are not waging wars against countries for more territory or in the name of border security. Governments are having to control sex and war on their own people for their own survival as an institution. Sex and war have potentially always been linked if one takes a closer look at their

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 93.

characteristics. Whether one is speaking of torture as an interrogation tactic, spying and monitoring one's own citizens' daily activities, or limiting the amount of children a couple can have in the name of population control, so many of governments actions in the present-day can come back to war and sex. In the modern age, however, the way they are linked together is a brand new phenomena the world has never seen before.

Through *The History of Sexuality* Foucault covers many issues presented in societies that a government must now, as of late modernity, concern itself with, including education, reproduction, war, the whole category that biopolitics was born out of was the realm of political economics. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Adam Smith's *A Wealth of Nations* became well-known and eventually became a widespread economic system by the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Western Hemisphere. The laissez-faire system championed by Smith had an expectation that the government would adopt a "hands off" approach to the economy. The invisible hand of the market would keep prices fair for both consumers and producers, so government intervention would not be needed. But Foucault would seemingly agree and disagree at the same with the notion that government should not be an actor in the economy. An example of this is free trade. Free trade by its own definition would be something that Smith and his supporters would loudly advocate for. Let business owners, shoppers, and others naturally come to a price for a product or service. But, as Foucault argues, free trade is not actually *free* at all. "There must be free trade, of course, but how can we practice free trade if in fact we do not control and limit a number of things, and if we do not organize a series of preventive measures to avoid the effects of one country's hegemony over others, which would be precisely the limitation and restriction of free trade?," Foucault writes.<sup>93</sup> He also goes on to note that monopolies must be prevented from

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<sup>93</sup> Foucault, Michel, and Michel Senellart. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1978-79*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, page 64.

coming to fruition and “there must be a free labor market but again there must be a large enough number of sufficiently competent, qualified, and politically disarmed workers to prevent them from exerting pressure on the labor market.”<sup>94</sup> So even though many western nations, with the United States and Western Europe being prominent in this, have adopted a laissez-faire approach to the economy, governments there still have a place in creating the conditions for having a free market. They must educate and train workers who can fill vacancies while also creating a safe space for trade and the economy to operate inside of. A key point that Foucault’s brings up is that a government must be able to create enough “politically disarmed” workers for the economy. One reason for instability in parts of the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia are that societies in these regions have significant pockets of their society unemployed and uneducated. For example, Afghanistan has over 9% unemployment, Iraq is at over 16%, and Syria has almost 11% of its labor force not working. Now these numbers may not mean much when you look at Ireland’s 12% rate and Greece’s 26% unemployment rate.<sup>95</sup> What is the difference? If you look at these countries through the lens of Foucault, you can claim that Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria have not instilled in their people a political nature that is nonviolent. They may be political, but that political frustration of not working lends itself to violence and terror. Instead of trying to peacefully petition the government for help in finding work, young men have seemingly in large numbers turned to groups like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in order to stabilize their incomes and families lives. Biopolitics, as seen through this light, may help in part to explain the turmoil and discontent in some parts of the world.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>95</sup> "Unemployment, Total (% of Total Labor Force)." Unemployment, Total (% of Total Labor Force). Accessed February 21, 2016. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS>.

## Biopolitics and the Economy

Contrary to what is often offered as popular belief, the argument is that the state must actually intervene to guarantee free trade and also to create a working class that will become politically involved but not violent. One can clearly see these ideas brought out in the social policy concept of *Gesellschaftspolitik*. While examples of this social policy can be seen in things like equality for women, decriminalization of drugs and non-violence, what we are interested in here is the idea that individuals must be able to identify their place and role in a certain economic model, one that Foucault sees having a biopolitical component. In a capitalist economic system that many western countries developed since Adam Smith's *A Wealth of Nations*, the placement of workers into that system is a vital one. The state has an important job in identifying what needs the economy has and what skills an individual has that the economy can use. So though Smith would argue the government should stay out of the economy and have a hands-off approach, Foucault sees things differently. A key point raised by Foucault is that in such an economic structure one must somehow merge the two lives of the individuals that are constantly tugging at them: their economic survival versus their personal and individual lives. What if these two parts of a subject's life do not balance well? What if they conflict? Though social relationships and economic relationships outwardly have not been looked at in this light before, Foucault says that in fact, you must "extend the economic model of supply and demand and of investment-costs-profits so as to make it a model of social relations and of existence itself, a form of relationship of the individual to himself, time, those around him, the group, and the family."<sup>96</sup> When people have a tough time forming those economic relationships to meet the demands of others around them - this is when social relationships can damage the security and stability of a state. Another way of looking at this statement from Foucault is to say that people

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 242.

need to feel invested in a community and, in a larger sense, the economy around them. When people cannot succeed both economically and socially in a system is when the system itself can break down. When people feel ostracized, are unemployed, and on the fringe of society is when security for the state can become an issue – especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the globalized and super-connected economy that we live in. For people that feel left out of the system or do not thrive inside of it tend to lash out against the system.

Many countries and entire regions that have had issues with terror groups have a significant part of their populations that feel disaffected from society at-large. They are said to reject the modernity that has engulfed them and want no part of it. They are said to not be able come to terms with the world that is around them. The world does not match up with their beliefs, customs, or idea of what they would want the world to look like. Biopolitical analysis would bring to light the fact that the government would obviously have a major interest in managing the people and the role that people play in the economy, social structure, and culture at-large. From the state's perspective, "the individual's life must be lodged . . . within the framework of a multiplicity of diverse enterprises . . . and numerous enough for him to not be dependent on one alone."<sup>97</sup> According to Foucault, it is the state's job to make sure that people have the basic job skills, education, and life experiences to be a successful member of the community. When members do not become entangled in many different areas of society is when security can become a huge issue for both the individual and the government. Civilization and the survival of the population depend on the government being able to efficiently mobilize and utilize power over its people.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 241.

### Foucault Interpreters and Critics

There are several interpreters of Foucault who interpret his work several different ways. Here I will attempt to highlight just a few so as to give an idea as to what kind reactions Foucault and his power-knowledge theory have generated. Writing in 1987, Tom Keenan argues that the power and knowledge that Foucault speaks of cannot be separated and looked at independent of one another. "Power and knowledge are tangled up in the knot of a 'not-without.' Each *presupposes* the other: no knowledge without power, and no power without knowledge. No outside, no priority."<sup>98</sup> Some critics of Foucault say that he too closely links together these two ideas, but Keenan forcefully writes that you cannot study one in the modern age without studying or closely looking at the other.

One of the most well-known critics of Foucault is the German philosopher Juergen Habermas. A contemporary of Foucault's, he disagreed with Foucault on several fronts when it comes to Foucault's interpretation of the states' power over life forms. I would like to highlight one difference between them that I think shows a significant departure in how they view the fight against supremacy from a state. Habermas lays out in his works the way people should go about living their lives on a daily basis. Flyvbjerg writes that, "Habermas would want to tell individuals and groups in a society how to go about their affairs as regards procedure for discourse."<sup>99</sup> Foucault, on the other hand, is not as concerned with process or the outcome of the struggle between state's power and the people it rules over. "He would only recommend a focus on conflict and on power relations as the most point effective point of departure for the fight

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<sup>98</sup> Keenan, T. "I. The "Paradox" of Knowledge and Power: Reading Foucault on a Bias." *Political Theory* 15.1 (1987): 5-37. Web. 23 Mar. 2017, page 14.

<sup>99</sup> Flyvbjerg, Bent. "Ideal Theory, Real Rationality: Habermas Versus Foucault and Nietzsche." *Paper for the Political Studies Association's 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference* (2000): pg 11.

against domination.”<sup>100</sup> Though Habermas and Foucault would have agreed on Immanuel Kant as the launching point for their own works, they nonetheless had important disagreements over what the notions of power, modernity, and democracy look like.

### **Biopolitics: A Newer Look**

Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality* and *The Birth of Biopolitics* help us to understand the complex and sometimes misunderstood relationship that populations have with sexuality. Institutions such as the church, militaries, and governments have framed sexuality in such a way that has encouraged everything from obedience to compliance to promotion and integration of economic and cultural practices. This conversation that Foucault pushed forward helped to explain the relationship that people had with the state and some of its organizations. However, Foucault was writing well before the 9/11 terror attacks in the United States. With globalization now a known entity in the world, one needs a fresher perspective on the relationship between war, society, and the state. With the advent of the so-called Global War on Terror after 9/11, liberal societies have begun to develop a paradoxical nature of how they interact with their own citizens and the rest of the world. Though liberal cultures tout the freedoms and privacy as the central tenets of their beliefs, since 9/11 they have behaved in ways that could be considered counter to their open-minded and progressive ways. This is where political philosophers Michael Dillon and Julian Reid will come in to play for us. Writing in the shadow of the attacks on the World Trade Center, Dillon and Reid have a unique take on the activities that liberal societies have undertaken in protection of their sovereign territory and population at-large. Dillon and Reid bring a more recent perspective to the discussion of what relationship a state should have with its people. Terror in the modern age has drastically changed

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid, pg 11.

the thought processes of what a liberal society looks like and what it is able to provide for its people.

Julian Reid, in *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror*, argues that liberal regimes must categorize life so they can better deal with it. He divides life up into five different subjects: logistical, nomadic, defiant, circulatory, and biopolitical. I will wrestle with each of these and see if we can bring to light the prevailing attitudes of the day when it comes to liberal regimes fighting the current Global War on Terror. Reid's first category, logistical life, contends that liberal regimes are actually in a constant state of readiness for war. That readiness for war entails having a society that has specific functions and jobs in preparedness for war. "Today liberal regimes interests in the promotion and defense of a form of life organized in accordance with logistical demands is all but transparent. In the context of the War on Terror . . . the subjection of societies to the needs of war have been replaced by the forthright defense of logistics as a way of life."<sup>101</sup> Modern governments and societies in the West have been some of the most active participants in warfare in the modern age. Is it because of the logistical life that Reid argues is prevalent in these civilizations today? In the context of Reid's definition of logistical life, a main tenet of the definition is that modern regimes organize their societies around this need for war. So though they profess to be peaceful states that only go to war for short periods of time and under specific circumstances, these regimes are actually under a constant state of readiness to fight wars. For Reid, this is not a provocative statement. The War on Terror has simply brought this organization of life into the limelight for the first time. "The declaration of liberal regimes' war without end against Terror only serves to bring to light what was essentially true of liberal societies from their beginnings; their subjection to a form of regime dedicated not to the removal

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<sup>101</sup> Reid, Julian. *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity, and the Defence of Logistical Societies*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2006, pg 22.

of war from social relations, but to the reduction of life to principles deriving from the organization of war as a necessary condition of existence.”<sup>102</sup> I would argue that Reid is saying nothing controversial in this regard as it pertains to liberal societies and war. If one looks since the industrial revolution in the mid-1700’s, liberal societies have been just as likely if not more likely to go to war compared to non-liberal societies. Though there are clearly many variables that factor into a country going to war, the fact of the matter remains that countries with large standing armies make it easier logistically to decide to go to war. Preparations for war are minimal if you are constantly in the state of getting ready to mobilize. Reid believes that just because you are a liberal society does not make you immune to warfare. In fact, he would almost believe the opposite, that warfare is at the heart of all regimes no matter what type you adhere to.

Nomadic life, the next life form that Reid struggles with, deals with, among other things, movement and space. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century these two ideas are paramount when you discuss terrorism. How does a state control the movement of its people? How does one control the sovereign space over which it maintains power? These two concepts seem extremely relevant in within the context of politics in the United States. President Trump is dealing with these two things by proposing a border wall along the southern border with Mexico and by shutting down travel from certain parts of the world. Reid writes that, “movement itself becomes an expression of war against the state in a context where the power of the sovereign depends upon its ability to determine and defend territorial rights.”<sup>103</sup> In this specific example President Trump sees an external threat to the United States and is attempting to put up physical roadblocks to foreigners coming to the United States. The Global War on Terror, which has been led by the United States, has been a struggle against segments of the world population that have been outside the reach of

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 44.

sovereign nation-states. The War on Terror has in large part been a battle against the movement of people that is not within the confines of the traditional system. Reid states that, “The War on Terror has been articulated within areas of the US foreign-policy establishment as a commitment to a defense of the traditional values and sovereignty of the nation-state against the deterritorializing threat.”<sup>104</sup> In other words, this is a fight, at least in part, against the dissolution of borders all over the world. And the strategy of the United States at the existing moment is to begin to shut down its borders in the name of preserving them.

Defiant life stems from life that lashes out against the system that it lives inside of. This life subject is either frustrated by the life thrust upon it or cannot positively mesh into the system and successfully integrate it. “Terror is a form of life which exists outside of history, its lack of an ideology, its refusal of productivity, and its disinterest in any ability to transform the organization of societies.”<sup>105</sup> I would argue that the current narrative of terror being religious-based is misguided at best. Using this idea of defiant life from Reid, I find it hard to justify referring to the current state of terror in the world as “Islamic” based. Groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda may paint their mission in religious overtones but the vast majority of Muslims reject their extreme ideology. Terror has been around for centuries and is nothing new to history. These groups mainly act out against liberalism and the West because they have failed to carve out their identity as they see it inside a western-driven globalization movement. These terror groups today are being defiant because they have utterly failed in creating a useful niche inside the system in which they can live.

Circulatory life seeks to tie together the struggle between war and peace for liberal regimes. This by far is the most pertinent life subject when it comes to looking at how out-of-

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid, pg 50.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, pg 71.

control globalization has become. “Terror,” according to Reid, “is understood simply as the fulfillment of a set of conditions and dynamics brought into play through the excessive development of liberal societies predicated upon principles of circulation and movement. Terror exhibits a form not of defiant life, but of circulatory life that has gone out of control. It prospers, it is said, from the excess of circulation which it accrues to a radically globalized world.”<sup>106</sup> The speed that which the world has changed has been too fast for some identity groups to have succeeded inside of. But what is interesting is that this circulatory life that Reid speaks of often uses the same features seen in modern societies to attack it. Al-Qaeda “is commonly portrayed as operating upon an ideology of the total rejection of liberal modernity, in organizational structure and strategy, it is extremely consistent with the contemporary characteristics of the most liberal of societies.”<sup>107</sup> Seen through this lens terror does not look nearly as much as an external threat to liberal regimes as much as an internal one. This is a much different outlook on terror than the usual narrative about Islam versus the West.

The last of Reid’s life forms is the biopolitical life. How a government contends in dealing with the safety of its own people is a question that is still trying to be answered fifteen years after the birth of the Global War on Terror. How does one monitor the movements and actions of its population but not violate the very rights that make a liberal democracy so unique and different from other regime types? This is the shift that liberal orders have seen in the last twenty years or so. How does one control life that is outside of your territorial boundaries? War has changed in this regard from the conventional wars of the past, like World Wars I and II. Reid writes that “the movement of liberal regimes toward a permanent state of exception in which war is reduced to a policing function to prevent the emergence of forms of life inimical to liberal

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 100.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 99.

order.”<sup>108</sup> Legislation like the Patriot Act in the United States is attempting to weed out and defend the United States people from life “inimical” to it. The key point about biopolitical life is that states seize and wield power over life forms that are sometimes hostile to it. How does a state deal with life that seeks to destroy it? Successfully answering that question is vital for a state’s survival.

In “The Liberal Way of War,” Michael Dillon and Julian Reid discuss the Global War on Terror in terms of liberal regimes’ exercise of rule over life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Liberal regimes by nature are ones that pride themselves on freedoms for their population and privacy for its citizens. But with the 9/11 terror attacks and subsequent ones since, the relationship these regimes have had with their people have also changed as well. Dillon and Reid argue that liberal governments cannot have such a distant relationship with their subjects. “Certain life processes may systematically endanger life, just as certain forms of life may endanger life. As a biopolitical form of rule, the liberal way of rule has to educate itself into discriminating between which life processes are good and which life processes are bad; and it is continuously suspended between governing them too little and governing them too much. It must similarly educate itself into discriminating between which life forms are good and which life forms are bad.”<sup>109</sup> A regime cannot productively keep its own security without knowing which subjects are the ones that could threaten the well-being of others. It is the regimes job to not only create a life form that is industrious for the society at-large, but to also then rid itself of life forms that could be a detriment on the civilization. “Liberal war,” Dillon and Reid write, “is designed to eradicate threats to the living that the biohuman is required to practice.”<sup>110</sup> As I mentioned earlier most

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 119.

<sup>109</sup> Dillon, Michael, and Julian Reid. *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live*. London: Routledge, 2009, page 43.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 127.

people characterize these threats to the liberal experiment as coming from Islam or the Middle East at-large. I believe this to be a dangerously simplistic argument as to where the threat actually lies. As Foucault may have cautioned us, the Global War on Terror is “not simply, however, one way of life defined by a commitment to essential liberties and freedoms versus another way of life defined by systems of oppression and prohibition; but a conflict between regimes empowered by their control and regulation of life properties and processes versus political movements opposed to the biospheric hubris on which liberal biopolitics is based.”<sup>111</sup> The current Global War on Terror, in other words, pits two very different social and governmental structures struggling over who will control the parameters of what life will be created and how that life will then live.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 132.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Conclusion**

The democratic peace theory and biopolitics do not at first glance have many similarities. One deals with a preferred form of government while the other deals with government policies regarding the replenishment and reproduction of its citizenry. But the more one delves into these two theories, one realizes that in the modern age that they both have some deficits when it comes to addressing the variable of terrorism and how it fits into their concepts of governing. The more one looks into it, the argument can be made that the democratic peace theory is camouflaging itself as biopolitics for the purpose of controlling populations that are not within their borders or sovereignty.

The democratic peace theory in modern times arose as a theory of international relations out of the shadow of the fall of the Berlin Wall and communism. As Eastern Europe and the Warsaw Pact fell apart, these countries quickly turned to democracy and the West for guidance and as a model for their own, new governments. So looking at the DPT through the lens of the post-Cold War period it is logical to conclude that as democracy spreads, so does peace. But recent conflicts have shown that this idea has some major holes in it. One only needs to look at the United States and the coalition power's foray into Afghanistan starting in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 as examples of how DPT failed. Though both are allegedly democracies in the present-day, they are very tenuous democracies with major security challenges, struggling economies, and persistent territorial clashes involving groups like the Islamic State and al-Qaeda. A key difference from when Eastern Europe rid itself of communism and America's venture into the Middle East and Southwest Asia since 2001 is that Eastern Europe appears to have openly wanted democracy as a form of authority. East Europeans eagerly sought out the help and

influence of the democracies in the West. In Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively, democracy was violently thrust upon these countries by the U.S. and its allies. There is no tangible evidence to say that by bringing democracy to Afghanistan and Iraq the United States and its partners are safer because of it. However, one can say with some certainty that the Islamic State was formed in part by ex-soldiers of the Iraqi army and others who were upset and frustrated by the U.S.-led incursion into Iraq. These examples show that physically spreading democracy can be quite problematic when certain conditions are not present and the democracy is being forced upon a people, if not a whole civilization. But sitting on the sidelines when it comes to foreign relations can be quite challenging as well. One can only see the current Civil war in Syria as to what can potentially happen when the U.S. does not get involved either diplomatically, economically, or in some other kind of support role in a regional conflict. What DPT appears to be, then, is a means for democratic nations to control and bring into their economic system nations that are currently non-democracies. Though it may be at least partially true that democracies do not fight one another in certain situations and are therefore comparatively more peaceful than other states in similar conditions, the driving force behind the spreading of democracy in today's world is mainly economic in nature, not political.

However, another other main issue with the DPT is that it presumes that democracies are intrinsically peaceful. The rights that the majority of democracies protect for their citizens can also be used to injure or harm societies by individuals within the population. Freedom of movement, speech, and assembly are just some of the rights that terrorists abuse when they carry out violent acts against nations and people. So although democracies desire to diffuse democracy as a regime type all across the globe, they may be more vulnerable to violence from within their societies than other forms of rule.

Biopolitics has unknowingly been front-and-center since the end of the Cold War, and especially since the Global War on Terror started after the 9/11 attacks. Reid and Dillon do a particularly important job in identifying the ways that governments, including democracies, must in a sense identify not just external threats to the safety of their civilization, but also the internal threats as well. And part of identifying those threats is dividing up life, as they see it, into different categories. What life is hostile to us? How did it get this way? What can we do about? These are just some of the questions that Reid and Dillon believe governments and society should be asking itself in light of the War on Terror. On the flip side of identifying life that is hostile or unreceptive to the customs society has in place, or is now putting into place a time of emergency, is also recognizing how you foster a life-form that is productive and industrious. A government's policies can encourage activity that is beneficial for society as a whole like education, employment, and having children. But this is the tough line that democracies have to toe in the modern age. Liberal cultures pride themselves on confidentiality, movement, and the ability to openly criticize a government's actions. But these same liberal cultures are now surveilling their citizens on a regular basis, restricting access to their borders, and increasing defense spending year-after-year. With these actions liberal democracies are acting in such a way that one could question whether or not the culture is straying from its core values. Former Canadian parliamentarian Michael Ignatieff writes that, "To defeat evil, we may have to traffic in evils: indefinite detention of suspects, coercive interrogations, targeted assassinations, even pre-emptive war."<sup>112</sup>

The main problem I have with biopolitics is that the managing of a life form can be taken too far. Though no one would fault any form of government for looking out for its security and

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<sup>112</sup> Ignatieff, Michael. "Lesser Evils." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 01 May 2004. Web. 05 Apr. 2017.

the safety of its citizens, liberal governments must be especially careful in the manner in which they carry out security and safety. When security becomes the biggest and most important issue for a society is also the moment when the fear of others who are said to not be like you can officially take root. Something that Reid and Dillon could not have necessarily foreseen was the rise of populism in response to terror across Europe and the United States. With the likes of Donald Trump, Geert Wilders, and Marine Le Pen, Western societies have been using the electoral process to voice their want for tighter security on their borders, cutting down on immigration, and with the three above examples a specific desire to see Islam's influence wane in their countries. This in itself is the major flaw in democracy: when a democratic populace is ignorant of issues, apathetic to being involved in civil society, and uninformed of world events, populist movements can seize on this and legally take power of the government. As a K-12 educator I have a front row seat to the next generation of citizens that will have the right to vote. While there is a large slice of students who are ready to be involved in a democracy and actively participate, there is also a large slice of students who wish to stay insulated and are resistant to cultural or economic change of any type. This is one reason I would argue the democratic peace theory is disguising itself as biopolitics, because democracies are using the cover of elections to elect individuals and parties who would, if allowed, begin to strip the rights of specific people and give power back to the government. This may be entirely opposite of what true democracies are said to theoretically stand for.

This attempt at reconciling two existing theories and seeing how they are potentially related to one another could be a worthwhile exercise for Western societies as well. It seems that in the modern age with more and more democracies than ever in the world we should seek to understand the political consequences of this contemporary development. One cannot assume

that because a country is a democracy than it is more or less peaceful compared to a non-democracy. This is a dangerous assumption to make, especially given the current size and scope of some of the world's democratic militaries. Societies should decide what their security should look like and what sacrifices are necessary to maintain civil rights, like freedom of the press and speech. Terrorism is not a new tactic that governments, analysts, and academics have yet to identify as a problem. But the reasons for terrorism have changed in the last twenty-five years or so since the end of the Cold War. And governments, analysts, and academics do need to have a conversation about what role, if any, democracy has played in generating, fostering, and mitigating terrorism. Clearly there is evidence to suggest that would say democracies do not fight one another. But there are also several events from the last fifteen years that would suggest democracies are actually the ones instigating violence. The populism that has sprung up in just the last five years in several parts of the West can at least be partly attributed to segments of some populations saying they want more security from their governments. They almost, in a sense, are speaking out against globalization because these populations themselves have not reaped the benefits from the advances we attribute to global capitalism. So the West has some soul-searching to do when it comes down to figuring out the link between democracy and terrorism. They may believe that by spreading their form of rule all over the world that they can achieve at least some degree of peace. But the realities of the results from the West trying to do this have been bleak at best thus far.

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