WORKING:

a conversation between Andrea Geyer, Sharon Hayes, Ashley Hunt, Maryam Jafri, Kara Lynch, Ulrike Müller, Valerie Tevere, David Thorne and Alex Villar.

As an artist I have always understood my work as a combination of different practices. One of them is the ongoing discourse that I have with my colleagues around working, teaching, politics, theory and of course the challenges of every day living. By its nature this discourse is rarely public. Being invited by Carlos Motta, to contribute to artwurl in form of an interview, I suggested that instead of generating a new conversation, I would invite some of my colleagues to formalize some of the already existing dialogues that we have and have had over the years to be contributed to the magazine. What brings this group of artists together, I think, is a shared agency in our work that I hope will become visible in some of its layers over the course of this conversation. Formally we decided to each ask one question which will be answered by everybody else. We will publish the questions in succession over the course of the next issues of artwurl. I would like to thank you Carlos Motta for his invitation giving us the opportunity to develop this dialogue.
— Andrea Geyer

Stage 4:

Question—Maryam Jafri: I'm sure everyone has been following the Steve Kurtz story. Recently on *Democracy Now,* they revealed that the CIA infiltrated a conference they deemed suspicious at the University of Texas Law School, organized by a Muslim woman on gender and the law in Islam. The irony is that a lot of the talks presented were from a feminist, very anti-fundamentalist point of view, but in today's hyper-surveillance society, in the shadow of the Patriot Act, this was deemed suspicious.

How has the harassment of Steve Kurtz (along with another professor of public health in Pennsylvania), the Patriot Act, the terror warnings (NYC has yet to grant a permit for anyone to march in protests during the upcoming RNC), the library surveillance, hostility at the airport because one travels a lot, etc., how has this affected our practices AND research as cultural workers, as well as our everyday thoughts and movements (i.e., taking the subway, not taking it when possible).

Ulrike Müeller: This brings us back to the very beginning of our conversation, however with a significant shift of interest. What we responded to on the level of rational analysis is brought up again as a psychological and personalized question.

While all the bad news and hard-to-believe-facts that Maryam brings up are actually not a surprise within the analysis of the current situation, they are a severe reality check, one that makes what we knew (and feared) as possibilities real. More than that: Things may be worse than we thought. They hit close to home and pose a direct threat to personal and artistic freedom. They solidify anxiety and can become the basis for the kind of paranoia that Maryam brings up when asking if we take the subway more or less.

The use of terrorism as unknown threats and enemy proves highly successful in the project of disguising the interests that govern the war in Iraq and the global political generation in general. Everything seems to be possible in the name of security, and power lies in the definition of security and of terrorism as its eminent threat. We know all that. At the same time this discourse terrorizes our daily life on a very physical level—it's another turn of the screws of the society of control. We feel that.

While I don't take the subway more or less, it's only on the subway that I'm underground. I refuse to give over to diffuse threats and warnings. I don't erase my traces in a world of surveillance. I ask myself how not to end up defending the status quo but hold on to what has been achieved in earlier political struggles and to keep reaching out from there. However I have to acknowledge that the current situation and bad news do affect me, and I want to take my emotions and physical reactions seriously. They're symptoms of a situation, reactions, but they happen in the intimate space of the self. And while my psyche is not directly accessible to me it is still a sphere where I am not without influence. So the question for me is about recent politics of the self and feelings as political states. How do we respond to the anxieties, fears and depressive moods that we encounter? Can they be shared and made productive in a practice of consciousness raising which does not solidify into identities? Or do we as artists see possibilities to mobilize different, more positive emotions to be shared in a project of liberation?

David Thorne: The question for this round strikes me as something of a reiteration of an overarching question in this ongoing discussion: How have current conditions affected our practices? As Ulrike noted, however, we are urged here to speak, in part, to the psychological, to our "everyday thoughts and movements." I am less interested in taking this question up on what could be construed as a more personal level (e.g., whether or not I take the subway less frequently, whether or not I am delayed at an airport, whether or not I have the fortitude to hold up under "the war effort," etc.) and more interested in thinking about the relationship between current conditions and the emergence of a new discourse of the political in art that is at once, it seems to me, genuine, opportunistic, open, exclusive, reactionary, and not without some potential. How do we account for this emergence? How do we assess the claims of this or that artist, curator, or institution? What are the contours of this political discourse? How is it related to larger shifts in what is called "public" political discourse? Perhaps I will reserve these questions until the moment in this discussion when it is "my turn to ask the questions," and for now I should take up Maryam's prompt with regards to my practice: in a nutshell, I think that the operative conditions within which we live and work have reached something of a breaking point, and will be altered radically or replaced with a new set of contradictions, "as we speak." I see this as a moment in which a kind of hope is possible, even if it is a hope smothered in a mixture of anger, frustration, desperation, political uncertainty, and perhaps a touch of the paranoia Maryam alludes to in her question. It is a hope that is unfamiliar and in a way inarticulate, since it is not predicated on a world-historical vision of some kind, or any longer tethered to the political projects of modernity (well, there are probably some lingering attachments, which make matters all the more confusing…). Perhaps, though, and perhaps obviously, it is less the case that this hope is smothered in anger, frustration, desperation, and uncertainty, than it is the case that these are some of the constituent elements of hope itself. This is the general framework, or the general frame of thought, for my recent work and research. Of course—to get to the question—in "everyday life," one's routines and habits and choices and decisions are affected by a reigning politics of terror. As I insinuate at the start of this response, it is not possible to say, "I will not let a bunch of terrorists run my life." But it is also not possible, and certainly not ethical, to accept the contradictions and conditions that the politics of terror instigates and aggravates; one has to attempt to figure out how to simultaneously live with and refuse these conditions. I am not sure how all this is playing out in my work. The series of text pieces "Cut-offs" is something of a starting point, I suppose, in which I acknowledge that I can no longer think the way I think I have been thinking. The works are single sentences that end before completion. Each sentence is digitally typeset and printed, and framed in a white, three-sided frame, so that both the text and its container are cut off. These works are not intended to resonate with some notion or practice of self-censorship, but rather with a productive doubt about the kinds of claims that up to now one thinks one has been able to make with a certain conviction. They are

unfinished statements; they are claims that fail not, I hope, in an abject way, but rather in a way that opens up to some other possibilities of thinking and doing. While the texts are written in the first person, and could therefore be called "personal," the subject is inescapably collective. These works are in part a response to—and a start at a thinking-through of—the socio-political and psychic effects of the policies and practices Maryam lists in her question.

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Kara Lynch:

the sound of hooves… horses galloping then slowing as their riders reign them in to quiet the steeds to a soft walk. Splashing through the river, sloshing, a voice rises to calm the spooked animals. Voices hushed. Through the blindfold she hears whispers but mostly her own breathing, unsteady, frantic, and her own mumbles, prayers of another dawn—hoping for another blistering summer day. Anything to take her mind from the whisk of the rope, the brush of a hat against her sleeve as thick fingers loosen the knot at her wrists that keep her planted on the thick western saddle. She feels the warmth of the beast beneath her, they both totter as his mane swings, wisps wet with sweat slapping her face. All of these things ground her. She knows where she is. The air rich with clay and the light breeze: a riverbank familiar. Squeaking, creaking, screeching, clicking from cicadas in the night: a light woods nearby. Breaths collide as she searches out one, close to her as though her own. Blocking out all others she hears his rough and strangled. She sees in her minds eye his young body limp, dragging. A heavy thudding, thumping, scraping all along the road to reach this place. Her eyes burn under the heavy broadcloth across her temples hiding her from sight.

She is walking now, pushed. Hemp coarse around her wrists and neck. She stumbles, her toes catch the edge of boards creaking beneath their weight. The air around her thick with voices, tobacco and the heat from bodies—but all the same she is alone in this walk. Water churns, sips, spills and runs

below as a breeze rises up in the space between her feet and the river below. Eyes closed; blindfold or no blindfold she cannot open them. She fears the spell will not break with open eyes and she will be left with nothing but the view down: a slow-moving river. It does no good to hope the rope will fret under her weight.

In the morning a boy playing hooky trails the river's edge, a long stick in his hand as he traces a zigzagging path behind him. Entranced by the wavelets rippling over rocks and debris he sees a shadow in the water. Not a fish. Not anything he knows. He looks up to the sun for answers. In the blinding morning light two silhouettes swing slightly slowly below a glistening steel bridge. Their feet rising and floating far above the water. Suspended. At first the boy continues to hum to himself. He stands still. Looks down at the stick, the sand, the water. Then up at the bridge. Then at the bodies. Back to the sand he draws circles around and around. He does not notice his foot tapping. He cannot bear to stand still, shifts weight between feet, hips thighs; he also cannot move. He will never leave this spot. He imagines that he too will be found by someone standing glued to the riverbank staring into the sun, drawing circles in the sand, tears flooding his eyelids. A gust of wind passes, pushes him forward and he begins to run. No destination—just help.

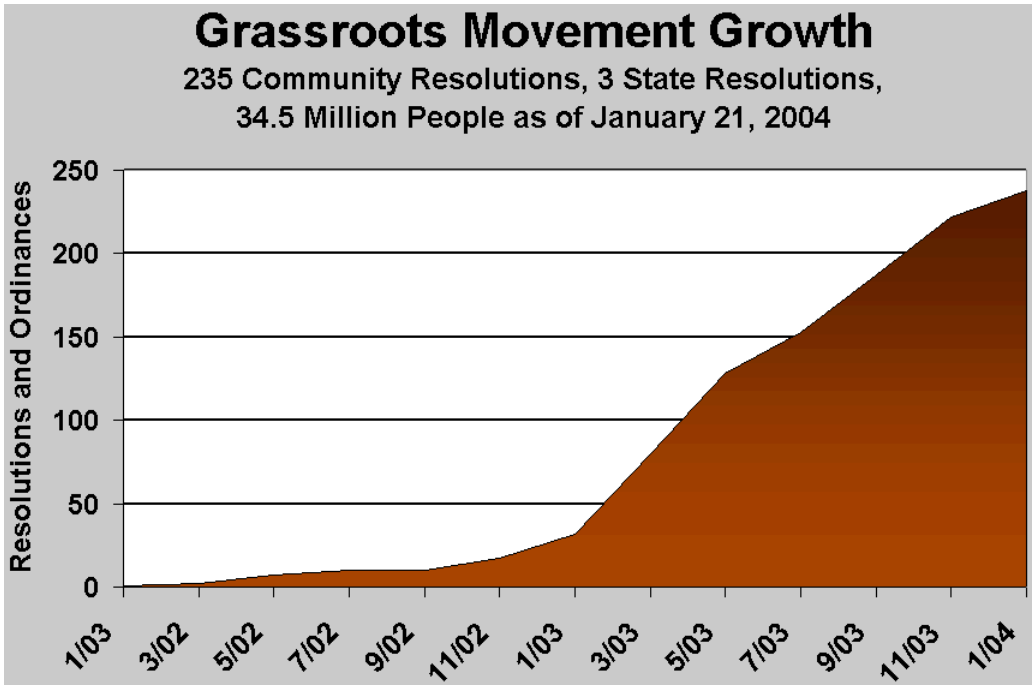
Later a crowd gathers along the bridge. A man with a sense for an opportunity paddles out on a skiff weighed down with camera equipment, to the middle of the river to get the best view. A pleasant May day hot enough for parasols and broad rimmed hats. Standing along the bridge on Old Schoolton Road over the North Canadian River these country folks pose for a photograph. Three in all. Two they look out over the river. One caught off guard, they look down. Long exposures and full depth of field bring everything into focus. Later they will stop by G.H. Farnum and Wife studios to purchase postcards to send to family and friends back East.

I share the above as a portion of my work and a partial response to the question. It is not enough to say that I don't do anything differently now that we are on orange alert every other week or say confidently as David offers, "I won't let a bunch of terrorists run my life." This description of a lynching of a mother and son in Okemah, Oklahoma in 1911 and it's photographic representation, is a way for me to think through this question of terror and it's daily violence—psychic, physical, social, political, etc. Lynchings run a gamut of emotion because they were largely used as exemplary violence to send a message, but they have effects on individuals as well as on communities. They harass both those who are the victims and the perpetrators because they are extralegal, but more than that, because they are brutal expressions of ordinary, every day violence, meted out on one group by another. These acts have a legacy I cannot ignore and have worked to engage within my current project.

What comes to mind as a useful direction to take this conversation is to think through the role shock plays in our current situation. Both David and Ulrike lay bare that state surveillance and intrusion into private and civic life are nothing new and are not even that surprising. In fact, what I would say about the Patriot Act and the recent events around Steve Kurtz is that the current surveillance is far more transparent than past manifestations of it in this country and globally. I think that healthy disillusionment is far more productive than disbelief or shock. Disillusionment allows for a revelation—we learn more, participate within the structures, we can be active in our relationship to the events and acts we experience: what David calls "hope." Shock gives us an excuse to not have known. We are off the hook. We are not responsible in any way. Turn it around and we are complicit. As we

are subjects in a world stalked by war on terror, and war campaigns dubbed "Shock and Awe," I think our boldest act could be disillusionment.

At present by interrogating, reworking, reenacting, readjusting and immersing myself into the space of the moment of a photograph of the lynching of Laura and L.W. Nelson, I work through these spaces of disillusionment and recognition.



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by Mariam Jafri, 2004

Alex Villar: I think that Steve's story hit close to home, making an increasingly generalized situation that fades into an abstraction of unrecognizable names acquire more tangible contours. As it becomes evident from a glance at the cases that Maryam reported and many others that have started to appear in the newspapers, the real target of the current security measures is no one other than the very population at large. Clearly, the most outspoken resistant segments are and will continue to be the ones more exemplarily harassed. But the real goal of the current attack on this country's already limited set of civil liberties still seems to be to attain support for draconian policies from a population ever more scared of what has been carefully constructed as the essential attack on their "way of life." Undoubtedly, this new development is particularly vicious, but in terms of its pragmatics, it unfolds in rigorous continuity with its historical precedents. Consequently, I would say that the urgency of this moment does not demand the reassessment of isolated aesthetic strategies, but rather, attempts at fortifying alliances between diverse forms of resistance.

Valerie Tevere: To quote Ulrike as subject heading:

"Everything seems to be possible in the name of security, and power lies in the definition of security and of terrorism as its eminent threat."

"If You See Something, Say Something" is the bold lettered phrase, in poster form, that has been plastered all over the NYC subways, and of recent, printed directly onto the subway

maps and metro cards. The doubling of the subject "something," has two inferences: 1. That you or I or we (the passersby, the users, the public) have a common understanding of what, in light of our current situation, that first something could be. As this search or recognition of that something occurs, then 2. you or I or we are asked to act in service. If one finds this slogan perplexing, accompanying it is a secondary sentence, vaguely meant to define in material form or action that "something": a suspicious package or activity. Thus, further assuming a common understanding of the term "suspicious" and what it may mean in this present moment.

A pamphlet, or a "negative dialectic" of sorts was handed to me during the RNC protests. Using the same typographic and utilitarian design aesthetic of the original MTA poster, this intervention linguistically played with the inferences, twisting them toward and focusing upon the intended meaning of the MTA poster. If You Fear Something, You'll See Something. I find this shift cleverly comments on the further indoctrination of anxiety in everyday life that has been spoken of thus far. It points to the kind of fear that allows and accepts control, breeds stereotype, and elects Bush. And this is nothing new, as Kara pointed out.

I agree with David, and would like to figure out how to live with and refuse these conditions. Perhaps the tactic above is an example, and as Alex had mentioned, it is important to build "alliances among diverse forms of resistance." Taking the subway less or more may not be the way, I'd rather ride my bike.

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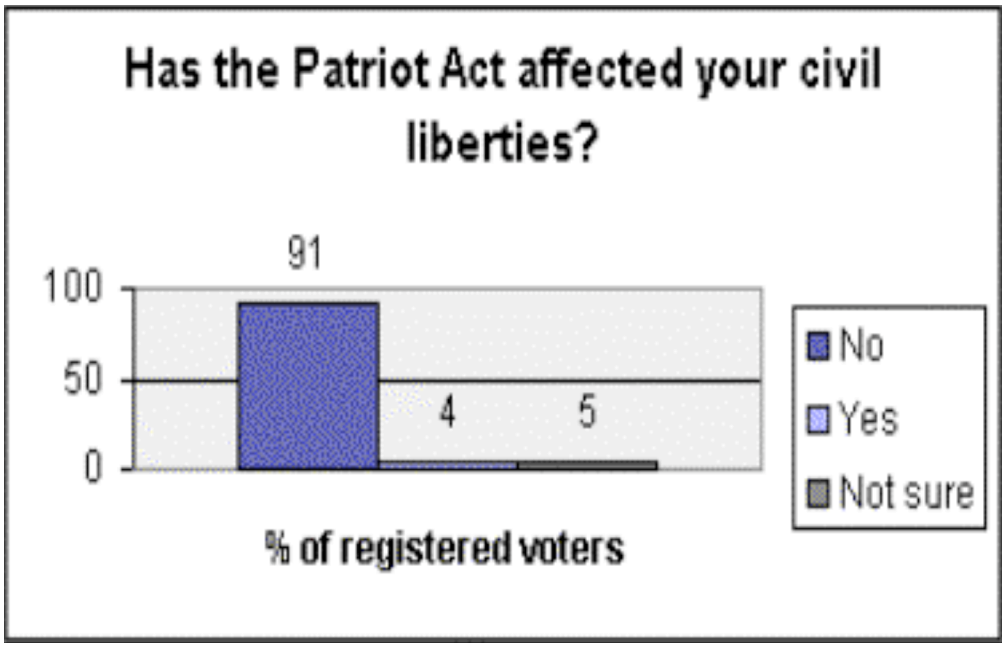
Andrea Geyer: As stated already above, the actual threat to our everyday lives has not increased, but the broad awareness around it has. In this context, the way that all kinds of powers employ "the emotional" for their conducting of public affairs toward the benefit of private/ particular/ corporate advantages has become more apparent, enforcing, as Maryam

points out, the politics that are repressing (through legislation, police surveillance, intimidation and complex systems of not hearing) the formation of public opinion, as the voice of the population through discourse. Therefore, I think the question for me is not "how do we deal with our fears," but how do we handle the capitalization upon or abuse of our fears, and how can we step back and re-appropriate our emotions for our own projects. Steve Kurtz's case (and the many others) are conducted partly to intimidate us, and also in concert with the unspoken request to distance us from (critical and uneasy) projects and practices like his (and others), singled out for government harassment. Maybe David's sentence should read in this context, *I am not going to let a bunch of government/corporate officials run my li*— Thus I feel, as Alex has already suggested, it is very important to not let that very singularization happen, but to align together, to group; that as a strategy in its need as well as achievement has many encouraging reference points in history. Kara points to the contingency of violence and the role of shock. I often feel that there is still the sensation of shock about the evolving situation today within the US, which I think has created a position—in this case among people working in the cultural realm—that is mainly responsive, in reaction to the repression, making (rightfully) an effort towards articulating and documenting the forms and methods of repression. But what is missing at times is a renewed catalogue of demands that would counter the daily threats to our practice. I feel it is exactly the fear/paranoia that Maryam has been hinting towards that needs to be re-channeled into practical considerations of how to continue critical work within the public realm.



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Ashley Hunt: In his writings on terror and violence in Colombia, Michael Taussig points out that instead of clearly identifiable and visible acts of violence, a far more effective means of terror-izing is the "disappearance." It is the body that vanishes without a trace, only to reappear months later a mangled corpse on the side of the road which opens a space of uncertainty, wherein the would-be witness to violence is kept from witnessing. The impulse to know (for the sake of survival) becomes rather an act of imagination, an active space in which one terrorizes themselves, repeating through guessing games and nightmarish

speculation the "terror" upon themselves. This is important not only in understanding terror's psychological impact, but also in how it functions as a regulatory principle, especially since, as I write this response, the '04 election has come and gone; the results are in.

Uncertainty blurs the line between victim and witness, evoking a psychological dimension reflected in the young boy Kara writes of, petrified in his tracks by the sight of the bodies' silhouettes. As the narrator describes, it is "nothing he knows"; despite his fear and desire to flee, "he will never leave this spot." Clearly he is not from among the families who later came to be memorialized in the photograph; rather, he is one who imagines this gruesome display to be his own future—a regulatory premonition which he will recall each time he has the urge to step out of line, to stand up for himself, to assert his humanity, (to vote), and which captures well for us the "site" of terrorism: not the bodies who've been acted violently upon, but the imaginary of the witnesses and non-witnesses, the community against whom this symbolic act of violence is meant to control, to call into submission. There is a counterpart to this this psychological dimension. James Baldwin writes of how he "refuses to speak from the position of the victim," for it is "the moaning of the victim" that "confirms the power of the jailer." Why this diabolic photographic practice by the white townspeople, but as such a confirmation: as re-producing a racial identity constituted by violence, where the excess of its violence reflects and exceeds the depths of the ideological fiction of race itself. Whiteness, like patriarchy, homophobia and other arrangements of domination so alive in today's political landscape, including today's reactionary nationalism, are unstable social orders founded in permanent crisis, and as such use violence—physical and discursive—to subjugate, to mark their Other; a mark that can be pointed to; evidence to affirm that the jailer himself does in fact exist.

Surely those who have harvested the fear produced by 9.11 into illustrious political careers and a powerful political machine, those who summon a public that David is trying to find a way to live with and simultaneously refuse, know something of this idea (albeit more likely from a CIA field manual than from Baldwin). The "refusal to be terrorized" is a refusal "to moan to the jailer," but as called for by these same duplicitous leaders it is a slippery admonishment: addressing the victimhood of the post–9.11–citizen from the *perspective of the victim,* while simultaneously assuming the *position of the terrorist.* As Alex has pointed out, this is one more utterance within the broader inventory of gestures and techniques used by the U.S. government not to "fight terror" as much as *to use* the War on Terror in order to terrorize, keeping us locked in a permanent state of uncertainty, submission and a resulting agreement to violence.

In these ways with regard to the psyche, I would understand terrorism, and the terrorism of the War on Terrorism, as a politico-social mode of subjection, through which we, as subjects, are attempted to be regulated and disciplined into submission to the state; subjects to a state as "jailer," confirmed and authorized in all its imperialism (external and internal) and its warfare (external and internal). It is a state which, through the style of "security," initiates us into a political subjectivity predicated "protection"; foreclosing the primacy of rights, citizenship, meaningful constituency and the social from that subjectivity's conscious desires, in hopes that we, out of "duty," give up once and for all every shred of control or power we might retain.

As I write this, which I began before the election, John Kerry has since given his concession speech, and so I'm sorry if from here on, I write a little more than I should, but I feel the assumptions of this round have shifted. It is easy right now to mistaken elections as the totality of politics, which we should avoid. Nonetheless, it serves as a useful flash-point through which we can challenge and assess our own analyses. Among the many questions we must now ask ourselves, most relevant to what I've been writing thus far would be the question raised so eloquently by the Daily Mirror, which I'll rephrase as: *How could so many people affected adversely by Bush in his first term still believe in him and vote for him again?* One of the many answers needed must take on this very question of subjection, through which our own repeated submission to domination might appear to us as a "duty." Judith Butler asks, "How does the subjection of desire require and institute the desire for

subjection?" Butler answers this in part by describing power's control over the appearance of the social, within which the subject perceives its only "place to live." In order to guarantee this place for itself, the subject "turns back" upon itself, repeating the modes by which it was initially subjected, the disavowals and foreclosures required of it by power, enacting norms and repressing desire. If therefore we inhabit (or co-inhabit) a political subjectivity initiated through the practice of terror, subjection to a state which is predicated on security and warfare, it then follows that we would have a great tendency to counter any organic political will, needs or "common sense" by repeating that submission, that terror, the norms and regulatory practices which power demands of us, so as to remain within this place power grants us "to live safely." To not repeat these norms is to "risk death," a risk we find literalized self-consciously in the terror of the War on Terrorism, through which any desire to not be obedient and approving subjects, not agreeing to the imperialism and warfare disguised as our own protection, is met with the threat (as announced by Dick Cheney if we didn't vote for Bush) of physical death. Clearly this has something to do with the threshold Andrea asks us to challenge, across which cultural workers and intellectuals are being "caught," against which she insists we must lodge "a renewed catalog of demands," in addition to being genuinely pissed-off.

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More complicated however is a U.S. national identity (as well as with Euro-centered national identities), as clung to especially, though by no means exclusively, by white Americans, through which we are initiated as dominant in a global order as figures who live a fantasy of entitlement, one facilitated materially by violence and plunder, and for whom the racial violence of the War on Terror is also self-constituting. Similarly constitutive are the homophobic and racial violence implied by the rhetoric of "values" which pervaded the election, and which also appear to be re-emerging in Europe. What strange hybrid of these two tendencies—submission to a state of terror and violent reproduction of a cultural

self—came together in Tuesday's polls? Are we at once the boy stuck in his tracks and the community posing for the photo? Let us note that among many other things, the "red states" are some of the most heavily devastated by outsourcing, downsizing, and incestuous, parasitic political regimes so emblematic of and connected to Bush. However, they are also bunched primarily in the South, where historically this key word of "values" is the coded rhetoric of segregationists and slave-holders alike, the public "rationale" in defending their orders of domination and privilege. Perhaps within our need to re-think ideas of "the masses," "the people" and so on, we should consider this relationship between fear and the fantasy of dominance (or the anxiety of losing it) as something dialectical—when frightened, subjugated masses are left only with the promise that they too are the jailer, and seek desperately to affirm this status by authorizing warfare, racializng spatial practices and excessive compliance with normative sexuality.

Among what has been discussed previously this round, including emergent discourses of the political, radical forms of organizing and alliance building (which I think we should avoid thinking of only as forms of "activism" but also as modes of living, since all life is organized in some manner or other), is also Andrea's urging to "re-appropriate our emotions for our own projects." Building upon what Ulrike had previously raised, beneath such a possibility lies an understanding of agency which I think we all share, and which is always a potential result/response to subjection. That fear and emotions are bound up in domination indicates that they can also be, as I think Ulrike was pointing to, a source of resistance and thinking/feeling/being otherwise; that they are political like anything else and can be a point of intervention, erruption, of undoing, politicization and the demand for/assumption of power. But what would "the emotional" mean other than sentimental or cathartic work, or work that merely riles people up? Perhaps it can instead map out a critical cultural practice, by pointing us towards spaces of "productive doubt," by constituting "hope" as David's puts forth, or fueling alternative socials and the authorization of subjectivities in opposition to and independent of dominant power. This is surely what so many of us attempt already, and the recent disciplinary violence visited upon artists and intellectuals is surely a reaction to it, suggesting to some degree that it must be effective. But how do we continue to move such practices outward in terms of collectivity, community, and importantly, beyond the art world and against the individualizing political economy it prescribes? Work that fails to address this last question will waffle ineffectively within the comfortable, sanctioned cultural spaces that quarantine "healthy dissent."

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Sharon Hayes: I will again resist any responsibility to summarize or find coherent connections between these interesting lines of thought. Instead I want to briefly raise a not-entirely-but-somewhat-oppositional point about the "example." I was reexamining some of my notes on Agamben regarding the textual or discursive function of example. He points to an important characteristic of the example: at the same time as it is being utilized to stand in for a group or a category, it is suspended from its normative function. So he says if you ask me to give an example of a performative utterance and I say, "I swear," I am not performing an oath in that instance but showing "I swear" as belonging to something—in this case the category of the performative. To invoke "I swear" as an example, to demonstrate its belonging, it is pulled out or (of course he says) excluded from its normal state: excluded in this sense from its very belonging.

For me, this academic point offers a critical addition to our discussion of Steve Kurtz, lynching or torture victims and the function of the state in enforcing or regulating behavior by "making an example" of individuals. I disagree a bit with Ashley's assertion through Taussig of an uncertainty that blurs the line of victim and witness. [Here also Agamben engages in another important discussion made in reference to Primo Levi that only the victim, who cannot speak because he/she is dead, is the "complete" or "true" witness and that the survivor speaks only in proxy to that experience. Levi says, "They are the rule, we are the exception."] For me the certainty in the system of regulation Ashley describes, is operative force in the act of so-called punitive or terrorizing violence, or the specific manifestation that Ashley references of disappearance. The act claims that it is certain that specific behaviors, specific bodies, specific choices will be punished. The exemplary victim or the exemplary violence sets the category, it defines an image that envelops both the punishment's cause and its effect.

In that sense, it seems quite important to me that we recognize the way in which, while yes, the explicit assertion is that I, as a critical artist, could be Steve Kurtz, we are also implicated in a relation of being not–Steve Kurtz. Could we have been him? Yes. But we are not and this means that we do not have to pay thousands and thousands of dollars of lawyers' fees, we do not have to fear going to jail for 20 years. We can still have biological agents in our house if we choose. We have not been caught. We have not been silenced. We have that privilege. I do not resist because I could be him but because I am not him. Exemplary violence fails, or could at least, on this level.

I know that this line of talk walks very close to that which excuses non-participation: the "not me," "not my family," "not my problem." But it is precisely because of this argumentation that I find this distinction important. I think that Alex's point about Steve's case hitting close to home is true, but as he says, this is because a generalized abstracted situation suddenly has precise contours and offers specific choices, actions and lines of resistance. It is not that it hits close to this possibility of my own arrest but his arrest ruptures into my daily living, into the events that I attend, the discussions I have with people, etc. It does so because of reasons both in my control and out of my control. I can choose to look away from the effect or to accept any set of given explanations as to why it is not "in my world" or "my problem." The question in these abstracted, more generalized situations of violence then is not why can I not see that this "could" be me, but why do I not feel, experience, see the relation these acts are actually having on my life.

Which brings me somehow to my suspicions about the assumptions in the question Ashley raises in relation to the election: *how could so many people affected adversely by Bush in his first term still believe in him and vote for him again?* I think the people who voted for Bush were not deceived, tricked, lied to or naïve. They are the ideal participants in a collective ideology. They will give up some modicum of their personal comfort and privilege (although many don't have to do this at all) for the good of the larger agenda. The so-called moral values votes were not in distinction to the economic or war votes. It's a well-organized, highly developed program. Perhaps if people voted locally for democratic or progressive candidates I would say we could consider these questions but they didn't. I have no reason to believe that Bush isn't **precisely** what 51% of the voting population wants, and I worry that we're hanging onto some idealist notion of the "people" to think otherwise.

CVs and weblinks:

Andrea Geyer lives and works in New York. Her work stresses the possibility of defining complex fluid identities in opposition to mechanisms which attempt to form and control static collective identities. Big cities are recognized as sites for projected images and fantasies, places of diverse political, ethnic, religious and social realities, integrating relations between human beings and their surroundings. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, Serpentine Gallery, Secession, Manifesta4, PS1 Contemporary Art Center, Parlour Projects and White Columns. She is a 2000 participant of the Whitney Independent Study Program. In 2003 she received a NYFA fellowship as well as a IASPIS residency. She is currently a resident at the Woolworth building LMCC space program. Over the recent years she has been involved in various curatorial and organizational projects among them Nomads and Residents, New York. http://www.davidreedstudio.com/andreageyer.html

Sharon Hayes is an artist who employs conceptual and methodological approaches borrowed from practices such as theater, dance, anthropology and journalism. In her most recent work, she has been investigating the present political moment through a critical examination of various historic texts, including a speech form the 1968 democratical

convention in Chicago and the transcripts from the audio tapes made by Patti Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army in the 1970s. Her work has been shown in gallery spaces and theatrical venues including the New Museum of Contemporary Art, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Andrew Kreps Gallery, Dance Theater Workshop, Performance Space 122, and the WOW Cafe in New York City. Hayes was a 1999 MacDowell Colony Fellow. She also received a 1999 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship and a IASPIS residency in 2003.

Ashley Hunt is a Los Angeles based artist who works primarily in video and multi-media. His main project of the last five years has been the "Corrections Documentary Project", exploring the political economy and relations of U.S. prison expansion.
http://ashleyhuntwork.net http://correctionsproject.com http://prisonmaps.com
Maryam Jafri is a video artist based in New York and Copenhagen. Her work centers on performance, narrative and gender. Her work has been shown in numerous exhibitions and screenings both in the US and aborad.

Kara Lynch is a time-based artist stretching her limits into space. Her work crisscrosses media, but she will own performance as her discipline and point of departure. Recent works include: 'Black Russians' 2001 117min documentary video; 'Mi Companera' 2002 12min video; 'Xing Over' 2003 6hr performance/2.36min 3 channel audio piece; 'Invisible: episode 03 meet me in Okemah, Ok circa 1911' 2003 7day audio/video installation. En exilio in La Jolla California, she retains a post office box in Nueva York and a storage space in Western Massachusetts. She is a gemini monkey born in the momentous year of 1968.

Ulrike Müller lives and works in Vienna/Austria and in New York. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and in 2002/2003 was a participant in the Whitney Independent Study Program. As an artist she is interested in a critical feminist perspective on social, political and economic developments and their impact on everyday life.

Valerie Tevere - Driven by discursive practices, Tevere's work has looked to the public sphere as a condition and framework for inquiry and discourse. Recent projects permeate the urban environment as temporal public works and performances that rely upon structured yet spontaneous encounters with city inhabitants. Tevere,s solo and collaborative projects have been exhibited internationally at venues throughout North and South America and Europe. She was a fellow of the Whitney Independent Study Program in 2000, a recipient of a Mellon Humanities fellowship at the CUNY Graduate Center 2002/03, and, as part of the radio collaborative neuroTransmitter, is currently in-residence at Eyebeam Atelier, NYC.
http://www.neurotransmitter.fm

David Thorne lives and works in Los Angeles. His recent work has addressed the conditions of so-called globalization; notions of justice shot through with revenge; and memory practices in a moment of excessive rememorations. Current projects include "The Speculative Archive" (with Julia Meltzer); the ongoing series of photoworks, "Men in the News" (1991-present); and "Boom!" a collaboration with Oliver Ressler.
http://www.speculativearchive.org

Alex Villar lives and works in New York. His work draws from interdisciplinary theoretical sources and employs video, installation and photography. His individual and collaborative projects are part of a long-term investigation and articulation of potential spaces of dissent in the urban landscape that has often taken the form of an exploration of negative spaces in architecture. His work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Institute of International Visual Arts in London, Museu de Arte Moderna in Sao Paulo, Paco Imperial in Rio de Janeiro, Tommy Lund and Overgaden in Copenhagen, Contemporary Art Centre in

Vilnius, the Goteborg Konstmuseum in Sweden, Joanna Kamm in Berlin, Arsenal in Poland, Lichthaus in Bremen and Halle für Kunst in Luneburg, Exit Art, Stux Gallery, the Art Container and Dorsky Gallery in New York. He holds an MFA degree from Hunter College and is a 2000 graduate of the Whitney ISP. In 2003, he received a NYFA fellowship.
http://www.de-tour.org