Introduction

Theorizing Bodies, Subjects, and Violence in International Relations

Between 70 and 100 people died in one airstrike in northern Afghanistan in September 2009 when NATO targeted two fuel tankers that the Taliban had hijacked. Having gotten them stuck in a riverbed, the Taliban decided to give them to impoverished villagers who were struggling to stockpile fuel for the winter. The bodies were mangled and scorched beyond recognition; because the bodies were unidentifiable, village elders asked grieving relatives how many family members they had lost, and distributed one body to match each one lost so they could be buried and grieved. When bodies had run out, the elders gave body parts to families still missing relatives. One man said, "I couldn't find my son, so I took a piece of flesh with me . . . and I called it my son" (Abdul-Ahad 2009).

Bodies have long been outside the frame of International Relations (IR)—unrecognizable even as the modes of violence that use, target, and construct bodies in complex ways have proliferated. Drones make it possible to both watch people and bomb them, often killing dozens of civilians as well, while the pilots operating these machines remain thousands of miles away, immune from bodily harm. Suicide bombers seek certain death by turning their bodies into weapons that seem to attack at random. Images of tortured bodies from Guantánamo Bay and Abu Ghraib provoke shock and outrage, and prisoners on hunger strikes to protest their treatment are force-fed. Meanwhile, the management of violence increasingly entails the scrutiny of persons as bodies through biometric technologies

and "body scanners." In each of these instances, the body becomes the focal point, central to practices of security and International Relations—the body brought into excruciating pain, the body as weapon, or the body as that which is *not* to be targeted and hence is hit only accidentally or collaterally. Such bodily focus is quite distinct from prevailing international security practices and the disciplinary ways of addressing those practices in IR. Convention has it that states or groups make war and, in doing so, kill and injure people that other states are charged with protecting. The strategic deployment of force in the language of rational control and risk management that dominates security studies presents a disembodied view of subjects as reasoning actors. However, as objects of security studies, the people who are protected from violence or are killed are understood as *only* bodies: they are ahistorical, biopolitical aggregations whose individual members breathe, suffer, and die. In both cases, the politics and sociality of bodies are erased.

One of the deep ironies of security studies is that while war is actually inflicted on bodies, bodily violence and vulnerability, as the flip side of security, are largely ignored. By contrast, feminist theory is at its most powerful when it denaturalizes accounts of individual subjectivity so as to analyze the relations of force, violence, and language that compose our profoundly unnatural bodies. Security studies lacks the reflexivity necessary to see its contribution to the very context it seeks to domesticate. It has largely ignored work in feminist theory that opens up the forces that have come to compose and constitute the body: by and large, security studies has an unarticulated, yet implicit, conception of bodies as individual organisms whose protection from damage constitutes the provision of security. In IR, human bodies are implicitly theorized as organisms that are exogenously determined—they are relevant to politics only as they live or die. Such bodies are inert objects: they exist to be manipulated, possess no agency, and are only driven by the motivations of agents. Attentive to the relations provoked by both discourse and political forces, feminist theory redirects attention to how both of these compose and produce bodies on terms often alien and unstable. Contemporary feminist theorizing about embodiment provides a provocative challenge to the stability and viability of several key concepts such as sovereignty, security, violence, and vulnerability in IR. In this book, I draw on recent work in feminist theory that offers a challenge to the deliberate maintenance and policing of boundaries and the delineation of human bodies from the broader political context.

Challenging this theorization of bodies as natural organisms is a key step in not only exposing how bodies have been implicitly theorized in

IR, but in developing a reading of IR that is attentive to the ways in which bodies are both produced and productive. In conceptualizing the subject of IR as essentially disembodied, IR theory impoverishes itself. An explicit focus on the subject as *embodied* makes two contributions to IR. First, I address the question vexing the humanities and social sciences of how to account for the subject by showing that IR is wrong in its uncomplicated way of thinking about the subject in relation to its embodiment. In its rationalist variants, IR theory comprehends bodies only as inert objects animated by the minds of individuals. Constructivist theory argues that subjects are formed through social relations, but leaves the bodies of subjects outside politics as "brute facts" (Wendt 2001, 110), while many variants of critical theory understand the body as a medium of social power, rather than also a force in its own right. In contrast, feminist theory offers a challenge to the delineation of human bodies from subjects and the broader political context. My central argument is that the bodies that the practices of violence take as their object are deeply political bodies, constituted in reference to historical political conditions while at the same time acting upon our world. The second contribution of this work is to argue that because of the way it theorizes subjects in relation to their embodiment, IR is also lacking in one of its primary purposes: theorizing international political violence. This project argues that violence is more than a strategic action of rational actors (as in rationalist theories) or a destructive violation of community laws and norms (as in liberal and constructivist theories). Because IR conventionally theorizes bodies as outside politics and irrelevant to subjectivity, it cannot see how violence can be understood as a creative force for shaping the limits of how we understand ourselves as political subjects, as well as forming the boundaries of our bodies and political communities. Understanding how "war is a generative force like no other" (Barkawi and Brighton 2011, 126) requires us to pay attention to how bodies are killed and injured, but also formed, re-formed, gendered, and racialized through the bodily relations of war; it also requires that we consider how bodies are enabling and generative of war and practices of political violence more broadly.

Security studies, the subfield of IR that focuses on violence, has defined its topic of study as "the study of the threat, use, and control of military force" (Walt 1991, 212), with emphasis on the causes of war and the conditions for peace. Despite the traditional focus on military force, security studies has by and large ignored the bodies that are the intended or inevitable targets of the use of such force. One classic work in the field, Schelling's *Arms and Influence* (1966), specifically addresses coercion as the threat to cause pain and to hurt human bodies in order to manipulate a

certain outcome. Few works are so explicit—that force involves the threat or use of military power to hurt and kill human bodies is usually implicit in security studies. Furthermore, when the violence to human bodies is made explicit, as in Schelling, such bodies are implicitly theorized precisely as organisms that can be hurt or killed. Contributing to the neglect of theorizing bodies has been the emphasis placed on *national* security. National security has long been the center of analysis in security studies, but in recent decades, the field has broadened to consider the referent object of security to be the individual, as "people represent, in one sense, the irreducible basic unit to which the concept of security can be applied" (Buzan 1991, 18). The concept of "human security" posits the question of violence against human bodies as a central issue in security studies, yet this theorization accepts the individual as an exogenous unit of analysis. The relationship between bodies, subjects, and violence still remains under-theorized, a matter at least partly related to the ways in which the conduct of war and political violence, as violent social practices, have been written out of the field of IR and, in particular, out of security studies as a subfield (Barkawi 2011). This lacuna has been noted, if rarely explored in depth: "the absence of bodies in the discourses of a discipline that was borne of a concern with war and hence violence against bodies, itself raises curiosity as to the conditions of possibility that enabled this absence" (Jabri 2006b, 825). This work addresses this absence and aims to show what taking bodies seriously would mean to the study of violence in IR.

The four forms of contemporary political violence and its management that I address in depth in this work—torture/force-feeding, suicide bombing, airport security procedures, and precision warfare—all engage the human body in a fundamental ways that are ignored or obscured by the dominant framing of these issues in the literature. The IR literature has asked, for example, whether suicide bombing can be considered a rational practice and what strategic functions it serves (Pape 2005; Gambetta 2005; Crenshaw 2007; Moghadam 2009), and has asked what meanings this practice has for its practitioners and the audience for this type of violence (Hafez 2006; Dingley and Mollica 2007; Roberts 2007; Fierke 2009, 2013). Theorizing the body allows us to ask questions that have not, and cannot, be asked, given prevailing implicit conceptions of the body in IR. The literature has not asked what effects suicide bombing might have that are not reducible to the motivations of individual actors; that is, what does the use of the body in this particular way entail politically that is absent in other forms of political violence? Understanding the political dynamics of the construction and deconstruction of the body (and more specifically,

the subject as embodied) opens a window into the symbolic power of bodily integrity and can help us to understand why suicide bombing is a particularly feared yet captivating form of violence. Taking bodies seriously as political not only serves an explanatory role in thinking about how subjects are constituted and how violent practices are enabled in IR, but also becomes a critical project for opening up space for thinking about politics and resistance in ways previously overlooked.

A focus on the bodies of prisoners at Guantánamo Bay reveals the workings of power in ways that have been overlooked by IR scholars seeking to theorizing torture and the "war on terror." The IR literature asks why states torture and how state identity and international laws and norms serve to constrain states in this regard (Foot 2006; Blakely 2007; McKeown 2009). Ethical perspectives in IR have also discussed when, if ever, torture may be permissible (Shue 1978; Bellamy 2006). Torture is generally regarded as impermissible, as a remnant of a pre-modern past, and as behavior that "civilized" states do not engage in. Seeing this kind of violent intervention on the body as something to be avoided misses how violence is often *productive*. We miss, for example, how torture and pain not only harm the body, but also produce particular subjects that can be tortured. Opponents to the force-feeding of hunger strikers argue that it is an unwarranted bodily intrusion, while proponents frame it as a necessary, lifesaving procedure, as well as an important tactic in the "war on terror"; both of these positions, however, miss the way in which this practice constitutes the bodies of the hunger-strikers as dependents and makes such techniques more acceptable to concerned audiences. By theorizing bodies as subject to human malleability rather than as fixed, we can see how violence constitutes differently embodied subjects, as well as some of the ways in which bodies can resist their constitution in the social order.

Extending our political analysis to bodies offers explanatory value into the constitutive conditions for violence in International Relations. By assuming that bodies are individuated biological entities, traditional IR theory has been unable to conceptualize bodies as constituted in relation to one another. As I argue in Chapter 5, this relational constitution of bodies is a condition of possibility for the violence of precision warfare. On the topic of precision bombing, traditional strategic studies debates have centered on whether or not the use of precision guided munitions substantially adds to the coercive effects of air power, and whether the reliance on such weapons is in the short- and long-term interests of the United States (Pape 1996; Press 2001). The causes and conditions that engender the targeting of civilians in bombing campaigns are still a matter of great debate

in IR, even though the liberal humanitarian wars in the post–Cold War era, as well as the "war on terror," have focused on the use of precision bombing (Milliken and Sylvan 1996; Thomas 2001; Downes 2009). Scholars have probed how the choice to develop and use precision air strikes and drones affects how bodies are viewed as potential targets, but less well understood is how precision warfare constitutes a political adaptation of bodies themselves, of the pilots and drone operators as well as those of the targets and those at risk from aerial warfare. Scholars and critics of precision warfare have argued that physical distance and psychological distance between the bomber and victim is a crucial condition of possibility for this type of violence (Grossman 1995, 97–113; Gregory 2004, 197–217). This type of warfare once involved targeting coordinates or grids in which individual people could not be seen. However, in today's precision warfare, the bombers and drone pilots can often see the targets of their missiles quite clearly. We must therefore search beyond the issue of sight and distance for the roots of this mode of violence, for mere visual representation of bodies is not sufficient to make killing in this way psychologically and politically untenable. By theorizing precision warfare as enabled by a conceptualization of human bodies as information processors that are an integral part of a human/technology assemblage, we can better understand the conditions for producing certain bodies as "killable" as well as how this form of warfare comes to be perceived as legitimate in ways that are occluded by theorizing this form of violence as "disembodied."

Besides opening up interpretive space and offering a constitutive analysis of violence in IR, there are important normative implications for explicitly theorizing the subject as embodied in International Relations. One aim of this book is to help create space for new kinds of theorizing in IR by denaturalizing the body. By casting the body as a material, "brute" fact that can largely be ignored, or as only the medium through which power works, we limit our understanding of the political possibilities for different kinds of bodily politics. Making bodies central to theorizing in IR allows us to rethink the dynamics of global politics in ways that open new avenues for politics. In particular, we can theorize the body as an effect of practices of IR, rather than taking the body for granted as an apolitical object. For example, as I discuss in Chapter 3, the body of the "Israeli Jew" is constituted, in part, by practices of recovery organizations in the wake of suicide bombings. Understanding the body not only as something that is acted upon in instances of violence, but also as something that is constituted in and through violence, can open up the body as a space for engaging in politics. Thinking about the "sex" of bodies as something constituted not by nature, but by the state and society, as the experiences of transgender

persons reveal, suggests that efforts to locate truth in the materiality of bodies—as biometric security procedures do—is not a neutral act of providing security for all travelers, but rather reinforces certain normative ways of living in a body as safe and others as risky or dangerous. The instability of the category of "sex" draws attention to the ways in which "the body" as a referent of security is also unstable. Bodies, then, can be thought of not only as objects to be defended from injury or as signifiers or ultimate truth, but as sites of tension and paradox that call into question the operations of security itself.

In this book, the normative aspects of theorizing the subject as embodied are also informed by feminist theory: feminists have been at the forefront of questioning the relationships between embodiment, power, and violence in order to challenge the legitimization of women's subordination through social and scientific discourses which contend that female physiology is the source of women's inferior social, economic, and political status. Through their analysis of the concepts of gender and sexuality, feminists have challenged the too-easy equation of subjectivity with physical embodiment. Feminists have interrogated issues of embodiment as political in order to expose how conceptions of the seemingly natural body normalize certain forms of political oppression and exclusion for those whose bodies are considered non-standard, deviant, or "other," including women, queer people, transgender people, racial and ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities. Denaturalizing the body and theorizing its political constitution in and through practices of political violence, as well as the ways in which bodies productively contribute to the character of that violence, is thus a crucial component of a project to undermine various forms of marginalization and subordination in International Relations. Much as "opening the black box of the state" allowed IR theorists to critically examine a much broader range of actors, issues, and practices relevant to IR, opening up the body to political analysis allows us to critically interrogate the body as something with a history whose story is continually being written. Feminist scholars have played a leading role in theorizing embodiment, yet feminist scholars in IR have yet to fully explore the implications of the political constitution of the body, and the body as a kind of political agent.

RETHINKING VIOLENCE, SUBJECTIVITY, AND BODIES

While feminists and other critical IR scholars have decried the "disembodiment" of theorizing about international security and have sought to center the broken, bleeding, and starving body produced by political violence in

our political imaginaries, such efforts at pointing out the cruelty of the violent practices of war do not necessarily change the underlying conceptualization of the body as an object of manipulation. It is here that feminist theory is most incisive, for feminists have struggled with the problems of how to theorize embodiment as a necessary but not exclusive aspect of subjectivity in their own terms—terms that can help us to "think the body" in IR in such a way as to provide new purchase on central concepts such as power, security, vulnerability, and violence. For example, violence can be re-thought as something that is productive and not only destructive; vulnerability is not just a condition to be overcome but a constitutive feature of the embodied subject. This project is also significant in that it extends and adapts feminist theorizing about embodiment, and in particular the work of Judith Butler, to the realm of international political violence. The implication of feminist theory's emphasis on the co-constitution of bodies and political structures is to give IR a new starting point, as theorists can no longer begin with political communities populated by actors whose bodies are undifferentiated and can be transcended.

I turn to feminist insights in thinking about bodies not only to talk about how gender discourses produce particular bodies, but how bodies are performatively produced more generally. The concept of performativity is central to how I theorize the relationship between bodies, subjects, and violence. By "performative," I mean "that aspect of discourse that has the capacity to produce what it names" (Butler 1994, 33). Discourses can be termed performative because they do not provide a neutral reflection of an underlying reality, but rather create that very reality. To say that bodies are performative is to be concerned with the production of material realities, and thus, in feminist theory, to challenge the assumption that the sex of bodies as a material fact lies outside the realm of politics. Feminist thought teaches us that the body cannot be taken for granted as stable or pre-political. The apparent materiality of the body is due to "*a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter*" (Butler 1993, 9). In other words, materiality has a history and a politics. The biological or "natural" body, stripped of its political history, is itself founded on a set of violent exclusions. The erasure of this process of materialization that makes it seem as if intelligible bodies are natural phenomena constitutes another moment of violence. Butler writes, "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeals over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (1990, 33). The discourse of our bodies as outside politics is an effect, not of a

single foundational moment, but of ongoing practices with the potential for alteration and resistance.

Butler refers to these violent exclusions—which not only form the body that appears to be material and complete (a "body that matters") but also obscure this very process—as normative violence. Butler's concept of normative violence names a form of violence that preexists the subject, as bodily norms produce certain bodies that fall outside the norm. "Normative schemes of intelligibility establish what will and will not be human, what will be a livable life, what will be a grievable death" (Butler 2004a, 146). The subject is an inherently embodied subject—it is not exogenous, but rather is produced through compliance with various bodily norms. In the subject's process of becoming, it must attempt to delineate its body from others, and to create clear boundaries between the self's inside and outside. To do this, it expels the abject or "constitutive outside" that nonetheless shows up to haunt the self, as this founding repudiation is still included *by* its exclusion. The subject is not reducible to the body, nor is the body reducible to the subject. Neither the body nor the subject is ever complete; they are vulnerable to each other and to others in ways that cannot be fully escaped and that are often violent relations.

Butler's concept of normative violence contributes to a distinctively feminist take on theorizing the subject in relation to embodiment and violence, but this approach is not confined to questions of gender or sexual difference.[1] Bodies that have already been subject to normative violence are often then subjected to the forms of violence that International Relations is more comfortable theorizing. Torture can be seen not as a matter of strategic calculation but as an attempt to maximize bodily pain on one who is already "unreal" as an embodied subject. Transgender people are often made insecure by being subject to extra scrutiny at airports because their bodies do not match gendered expectations of the security scanners. The posthuman bodies of precision warfare make it possible for individuals and civilians to be killed by drones. In establishing which lives will be livable, normative violence acts as a precursor to the violence we are more familiar with, making certain lives, certain bodies subject to violence that is not considered a wounding or a violation. Violence as we usually think of it—the violence that injures and kills preexisting bodies—is also performative in producing certain embodied subjects, as violence is also a practice that constitutes certain embodied subjects. For example, as I argue in Chapter 2, the force-feeding of hunger-striking prisoners produces these prisoners as "dependent" subjects by a citational reference to the practice of force-feeding unconscious and mentally unstable patients. Violence as something that can be rationally managed and controlled is

undercut by this view of violence as productive of bodies and relations (see also Barkawi 2011).

My aim in this book is to challenge scholars of security studies and IR more broadly to rethink subjects in terms of their embodiment. Bodies are not natural or pre-political objects that are only acted upon, but are inherently unstable. They are produced in multiple ways through practices of international war and security, which are also productive of certain subjects and political possibilities. Warfare and political violence function to both make, and remake, bodies, not only in the sense of harming and killing them, but in making them into knowable types. Because suicide bombing, for example, obliterates the boundaries of the individual body and the boundaries between bodies—thereby destabilizing the political continuity of the state—and it expresses the political work that is necessary to make bodies appear as whole and complete and unquestionably belonging (or not) to a political community, work that is attempted in the recovery and burial effects following bombing. Because traditional IR theorizes the body of the subject as existing outside politics, it cannot see how violence can be understood as a creative force for shaping the limits of how we understand ourselves as political subjects, as well as forming the boundaries of our bodies and political communities. Torture, as I argue, expresses the instability of the role of prisoners relative to American identity in the "war on terror," as the prisoners are made into "enemy combatants" through their torture, and "dependents" through their force-feeding. In the practice of precision warfare, violence expresses the instability of bodies by its ability to transform certain bodies into virtually invulnerable "posthuman warriors" while simultaneously making other bodies "killable" as accidental collateral damage or as marked for death. These practices of warfare express the instability of bodies by making and remaking the terms on which these bodies are constituted in their respective political communities.

I engage critically with Judith Butler's work on various aspects of embodiment as an important grounding for rethinking bodies in IR, while acknowledging that her approach is not without several limitations. My argument of the expressivity of violence differs from Butler's in that her account of gender performativity describes a relationship between the structure of gender and an individual's performance of his or her assigned role in that structure. Individuals can undermine the power of the gender norm through parody (Butler 1990, 142–145). My claim about bodies is somewhat broader than Butler's. In discussing warfare and political violence, there is not necessarily a structure, like that of gender and heteronormativity, that regulates the behavior of individuals; rather, the

political interactions that produce bodies and subjects take place in different power dynamics, including dynamics between two or more individuals, between individuals and the state, or between groups of individuals drawing on larger dynamics of gender, race, and nation. In other words, the power to produce bodies as political subjects is more diffuse. Butler is mainly concerned with the regulatory effects of gender, whereas I am concerned with the constitution of bodies as political subjects more generally. Gender is an important productive discourse, but it is not the only one. Bodies are produced by a variety of practices, including political violence, but they are also produced by discourses of race, religion, sexuality, and civilization that—most important for the argument I advance in this project—constitute the bodies of certain subjects as torturable or killable, lives that must be protected or lives that are expendable.

Butler's model of gender performativity also does not go far enough to account for the ways in which bodies matter; that is, it theorizes bodies, in effect, as only blank forms to be molded by discourse. In recent years, feminists have articulated a vision of embodiment in which bodies have a form of agency; bodies can be productive, as well as produced (Barad 2007; Coole and Frost 2010). The materiality of bodies is not only an effect of political practices, but such practices are formed in relation to bodies as well. The "culture" of discourse and politics and the "materiality" of the body are intimately entangled in a chiasmic relationship. Bodies are both constraining (insofar as they are imposed upon by relations of power) and enabling (as they possess creative or generative capacities to affect the political field). I argue that a dynamic model of embodiment is needed in order to theorize the body in International Relations: bodies must be understood as both material *and* cultural, both produced by practices of International Relations *and* productive themselves. Bodies are thus not fixed entities, but are always unstable and in the process of becoming. They are ontologically precarious, existing only in virtue of certain material/political conditions that allow them to be intelligible to others.

DESIGN OF THE BOOK

In this book, I engage concrete international events to think about the embodiment of the subject in practices of security and violence. In order to show what is at stake in thinking about bodies in IR, the first chapter provides a reading of how the subject has been theorized in relation to bodies and violence in both conventional and critical IR theories. I argue that, in conventional International Relations, bodies have implicitly and

problematically been understood in liberal humanist terms as individual, material objects, preexisting the political entities that house sovereign subjects. However, contemporary practices of violence are constituted not only in reference to sovereign power, as most IR theory assumes, but biopower as well. Biopolitical violence takes bodies as not only objects of protection, but objects of active intervention; bodies are constituted as individuals and as populations that must be killed, or must be made to live (Foucault 2003). As such, biopolitical practices of violence call our attention to the question of *how* bodies are constituted as objects and what the parameters and possibilities for embodied subjectivity are. Feminist theory in IR has been at the forefront of thinking about embodiment as both a constitutive feature of the subject and as inescapably political, but such scholarship sometimes falls short of a political understanding of the constitution of bodies as opposed to an interpretation of a preexisting body. This poses a limitation for feminist thinking about violence.

The remaining chapters are each oriented toward a specific set of violent practices or the management of violence: torture, suicide bombing, airport security assemblages, and precision warfare. These chapters show how contemporary practices of violence undermine IR's implicit assumptions about bodies while contributing to an alternative theorization of bodies, subjects, and violence though readings of contemporary feminist theory, especially the work of Judith Butler. These chapters develop my argument of the productivity of violence—that violent practices in International Relations express the instability of bodies through their production of embodied subjects, and that violent bodies express the excess of the subject and are also productive of International Relations. I argue that understanding bodies as both produced by, and productive of, International Relations is crucial to understanding aspects of political violence that go untheorized when we assume that violence only befalls bodies constituted outside the dynamic relations that form bodies in the first place. The bulk of the book is separated into discussions of different yet interrelated practices of violence; as such, these arguments are woven together, rather than presented linearly.

Chapters 2 through 5 each critique prevailing theorizations of bodies in IR through an analysis of specific modes of contemporary political violence. Each of these chapters builds upon the theoretical work of prior chapters to dislodge traditional IR's view of the body: the body as individual organism driven by the will of subjects. Chapter 2 critiques IR's assumption of the subject as a self-preserving, speaking subject of consent to a social contract through a discussion of the embodied politics of torture, hunger striking,

and force-feeding at Guantánamo Bay. Torture in this case cannot be explained solely as an act meant to establish the presence of the sovereign state, given that is it denied, done in secret, and purposefully deployed so as not to leave visible marks on the body. If the prisoners at Guantánamo Bay can be considered neither rationally self-preserving nor "speaking" in the terms offered to us by liberal and social contract theory, we must seek other grounds for theorizing this violence. The limits of torture, precluding the death of inmates and their force-feeding, suggest that torture in this context operates under a logic that prisoners can be harmed, but that their lives must also be forcibly sustained by the state. Such a logic needs bodies to be not only objects of manipulations, but able to be produced through violence as certain types of bodies (in this case, "torturable" enemy combatants and "dependents" who can be force-fed). I argue that the practices of violence in Guantánamo Bay suggest that bodies are not "natural" objects, as conventional IR theory would assume, rather that they are produced by practices of international security. Furthermore, the hunger striking of the prisoners suggests that bodies are not only objects of manipulation, but are a kind of agent in their own right.

Having set the stage for the need to think about bodies as politically constituted as well as *constituting,* I turn to suicide bombing in Chapter 3 as a form of violence that not only forces us to confront these themes, but also presents a challenge to the assumption of the body as individual and self-contained. The literature on this issue has been preoccupied with questions of the motivations of the bomber and has not probed the implications of suicide bombing as an embodied practice caught up in contemporary discourses of life and security. In this chapter, I ask not what this practice means to various parties, but what the body *does*—that is, what political work does the body do as it is destroyed in order to transform into a weapon to kill others? Likewise, what are the political effects of efforts at recovering and reconstructing the bodies of bomber and victims? I argue that suicide bombing, understood as an embodied practice, is not only a destructive act of killing oneself in order to kill others, but also can be understood as a productive act as well. The bodies produced in this moment as lifeless flesh, as corpses, are a source of horror and disgust. They are, in feminist psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva's concept, *abject*: that which defies borders and is expelled to create the self. As "abject bodies," suicide bombers frustrate attempts at calculation and rational control of security risks, and, in their mutilated flesh, expose as unstable the idea of the body as a whole with clearly defined boundaries between inside and outside. Female suicide bombers, whose bodies are already considered "abject," produce a politics of the body that exceeds narratives of victimhood, and whose very

monstrosity symbolically threatens the foundations of the nation-state. I also turn to attempts at reconstructing the bodies of victims and perpetrators of suicide bombings to ask what is at stake in these attempts to construct subjects out of mutilated bodily remains, arguing that the "resubjectification" of these bodies is a key practice in the production of the state and gendered subjects. Suicide bombing thus becomes a site that reveals how power molds, shapes, and constitutes the borders of the body and the state simultaneously. The explosive body of the suicide bomber thus has destabilizing effects beyond the motivations of its perpetrators and exposes the political work necessary to maintain the illusion of secure, bounded bodies and states.

Chapter 4 continues to build the argument that our bodies are deeply unnatural by discussing their production in airport security assemblages as simultaneously *only* material as abject flesh and dematerialized as bodies of information. The airport security assemblages manage the threat of violence by transforming embodied subjects into suspicious flesh that can be dissected digitally in a search for the truth of a person's riskiness or trustworthiness. I begin by describing airport security assemblages in terms of how travelers are treated as informational patterns, and then as abject flesh in the process of locating dangerous or risky bodies. At the same moment that travelers are transformed into abject bodies by "body scanners," these bodies are dematerialized, made into information to be analyzed for evidence of risk. I argue that the lived experiences of travelers in airport security assemblages are situated at the nexus of the material and symbolic, and reveal how these categories are intertwined in the production of biometric bodies as ultimate truth. Transgender people and other bodies that do not conform to gender expectations reveal the problematic location of "the material" (and thus "securable") in the bodies of humans. I theorize airport security assemblages as a site of struggle over the meaning of materiality and "the real" and as a contested site of the production of both safe and unruly bodies in the name of protecting populations.

While previous chapters have theorized bodies as only precariously contained and both material *and* symbolic, Chapter 5 builds on this theorization to argue that bodies are formed in relation to other bodies, both human and non-human. In contemporary precision warfare, including the use of drones, the relationship between bombers and bombed is much more than strategic and adversarial; it is a deeply asymmetrical form of violence in which the bombers are virtually risk-free. In this chapter, I investigate the co-arising formation of the bodies of bombers and the bodies of those targeted for assassination, as well as the bodies of bystanders, to ask about

the conditions of possibility for this kind of violence. The use of drones pushes our thinking about agency and subjectivity in terms of the posthuman, or the human bodies as an assemblage of organic and technological, cultural, and natural materials and forces. I argue that the attempted (but ultimately incomplete) transformation of the human body into an information processor enables a certain moral and political calculus of which bodies "count." The posthuman bodies of pilots and drone operators are constitutive components of a regime that carefully seeks out individual bodies to kill, yet cannot provide an accurate count of the number of civilians killed.

These four chapters are linked by a demonstration that bodies are not outside social relations, but instead are produced in various incarnations by practices of security. Violence is not only something that is done to an already established body—rather, various forms of violence are part and parcel of the production of the various bodies that are subjected to violence. These chapters demonstrate the inadequacies of the ways in which bodies have been conceptualized in security studies, whether security is understood in terms of the protection of discrete, separate human beings or the guarding of aggregations of bodies in populations. These four chapters, each in their own right, demonstrate the disaggregation of bodies and subjects and reveal the bodies of IR as profoundly *unnatural* bodies produced through practices of violence. I argue that bodies are neither stable in themselves nor in relations to other bodies, but rather are produced through their relations to other bodies.

In Chapter 6, I show how the theorization of embodied subjects that this work has enabled can be applied to critique an emerging framework for understanding and addressing contemporary mass violence: the doctrine of "Responsibility to Protect" (RtoP). If we theorize bodies as I have argued we should—as both produced by and productive of politics and not contained in themselves nor in their relations to others—we can now think about embodied subjects in connection to RtoP in such a way that challenges the terms of "responsibility" by considering not only harm done to existing bodies, but the production of certain bodies as those that can be harmed and certain bodies as invulnerable. Specifically, I attempt to think through the paradigm of RtoP from Judith Butler's theorization of bodies as constitutively vulnerable. I show that thinking through the ethical implications of RtoP from an ontology of vulnerability has broader implications for the way in which we think about agency in relation to practices of violence.

In the conclusion, I seek to rearticulate the nexus of bodies/subjects/violence through feminist theory, particularly engaging with the work of

Judith Butler. Placing her work in conversation with other feminist theorists, I provide a conceptualization of a body politics that understands bodies as produced by, and productive of, social and political relations. In reading feminist theories of embodiment, I seek to recapture a sense of the vulnerability that is always present in theories of power and violence, not only in the sense of bodily vulnerability to violence and death, but also in terms of the political forces that constitute bodies as we know them. Such a reading of subjects as constitutively embodied prompts a different understanding of the relationship among subjects, bodies, and violence that has implications for both constitutive theory and critical theory in IR. I also suggest a research agenda for the future study of embodied subjectivity in International Relations.