VIRTUAL WEAPONRY

THE MILITARIZED INTERNET IN HOLLYWOOD WAR FILMS

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For Julia, all of everything

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Introduction: Virtual Weaponry

After watching a TV news report about men terrorizing a village, industrialist-playboy Tony Stark flies from his home in the United States to that village in Afghanistan in his robotic Iron Man suit. After he is shot out of the sky by a missile, he pulls himself up out of a crater, dodges another giant shell, fires a tiny explosive into the tank and walks away as it explodes spectacularly. As he is being shot at by another terrorist soldier, he flies up into the air and pauses. The movie switches to a shot from Stark's perspective, looking out through the suit's eye slits; the audience watches as the computer system within the suit scans the landscape, outlining each individual with a digital red silhouette indicating potential targets while popping up annotative information beside objects ("Jericho missiles"), after which Stark fires his hand-mounted weapons at his enemies. The movie then cuts to a group of men rounding up civilians, and just as one is about to shoot a father in front of his screaming son, Stark lands and punches one man so hard it launches him dozens of feet backwards. As he comes upon another hoard using civilians as shields, he powers his weapons down and stands with his arms at his sides. While completely still, the movie again cuts to the interior point of view of Stark within the suit, and this time the computer system separates the people into the binary of "Hostile" (identified by a red bull's-eye) and "Civilian" (identified by white text); guns then rise from each of his shoulders and he expertly snipes just the terrorists out of the group, leaving the civilians unharmed (Image 1.1).

Image 1.1 Tony Stark and his Iron Man suit separate ally from enemy

This scene from *Iron Man* (Dir. Jon Favreau 2008) involves a number of actions and cinematic effects that are common throughout the very popular series of films that feature the character of Tony Stark as Iron Man. What is that audience to make of the fact that Stark just flies to another country to carry out vigilante justice with his own military-style technologies? What is the audience who watches such a scene being encouraged to think about their relationship to their digitally networked technology in such scenes? In what ways do Stark's violent acts on the battlefield affect those relationships? With all these questions in mind, broadly, as bell hooks writes in her introduction to *Reel to Reel*, "Whether we like it or not, cinema assumes a pedagogical role in the lives of many people. It may not be the intent of a filmmaker to teach audiences, but that does not mean that lessons are not learned" (2). Beyond this, hooks adds, "Movies not only provide a narrative for specific discourses of race, sex, and class, they provide a shared experience, a common starting point from which diverse audiences can dialogue about these charged issues" (3). To this end, Kellner states that "contemporary cinema can be read as a contest of representations and a contested terrain that reproduces existing social struggles and transcodes the political discourses of the era" (2); as such, he continues,

> films are an especially illuminating social indicator of the realities of a historical era, as a tremendous amount of capital is invested in researching, producing and marketing the product. Movie creators tap into the events, fears, fantasies, and hopes of an era and give cinematic expression to social experiences and realities. (10)

Their mass scale makes them especially important texts as their "lessons" reach an enormous, global audience in a manner that few other forms of entertainment are capable of. From this perspective, considering that each movie is a capsule of an era's attitudes and reflects a number of cultural forces and voices, this text then begins to answer what arguments are being constructed and reproduced within movies like *Iron Man* and the other war films discussed throughout this book, with a more specific focus on the "fears, fantasies, and hopes" that emerge from the portrayals of digitally networked technologies within those movies.

Broadly, "war has served as the aesthetic as well as the technological laboratory of modern films" (Der Derian *Virtuous War* 165). Barry Langford points out that "the invention of cinema coincided with a decade of imperialist military conflicts" and that "warfare has been one of the movies' principal subjects since their infancy" (105). He contends that D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of A Nation* (1915), one of Hollywood's first blockbusters and examples of the war film genre, "relocated the audience's relationship to screen warfare away from the simple consumption of war-as-spectacle towards narrative participation and empathetic participation in the terrifying experience of modern war" (106); this film provides the visual and affective template for films in the genre to follow and replicate. With war as a main focal point of much of cinema's development, and therefore at the heart of much of the medium's cultural "lessons," it is useful to begin with a definition of the war film genre. Jeanine Basinger, in her indispensable *The World War II Combat Film*, argues that "because a genre story is a kind of shell to be filled, many subtle variations on plot are presented from film to film without damaging the basic units of its presentation" (16). Speaking more specifically to the war film, as Neale summarizes in *Genre and Hollywood*, early genre scholars insisted that combat scenes be a "requisite ingredient" (125). However, upon sustained examination, that definition is too narrow. A far more useful, and simple, definition is that "war films are films about the waging of war" (Neale 125). This obviously broad definition is illustrative in that such a genre (the basic "shell") covers a wide range of movies through subgenre and cross genre mixing[1] and fits well with David LaRocca's understanding of the contemporary war film:

> [War] films regularly involve the portrayal of political decision making, so the workings of war can always in some measure trace back to the ideas, ideologies, and decisions of individuals and their interests, loyalties,

obligations, or factions … commanders and soldiers, but also to politicians and policymakers, diplomats and lobbyists, the intelligence and clandestine services, and even journalists and image-makers. (16)

Further, Neale utilizes R.E. Shain's work in the 1970s in pointing out that "a war film [deals] with the roles of civilians, espionage agents, and soldiers in any aspect of war (i.e., preparation, cause, prevention, daily life, and consequences or aftermath) … war films therefore do not have to be situated in combat zones" (as quoted in Neale 125). From this, Basinger argues that "the war film does not exist in a coherent generic form. Different wars inspire different genres. 'War' is a setting, and it is also an issue. … 'War' can be a metaphor, or it can be a background to other stories" (9). LaRocca makes the point that, "If war is now part of our daily lives, then arguably any film that emerges out of a contemporary context might qualify—or recommend itself in some fashion—as a war film" (26). It is because of this ubiquity that LaRocca contends that there must be an urgency in the immediate analysis of the genre: "Given the radical degree to which war films have propagated, splintered, hybridized, found variants and versions, it is highly pertinent to invite scholars to think anew about the philosophical significance of the genre and its myriad representatives" (14) and, as such, he has collected up what he calls "The Multifarious Forms of War Films: A Taxonomy of Subgenres" (489) in an initial attempt to parse through the many multiple splinters of the genre. All together, the war film needs to be identified as a shifting and sprawling genre, with further recognition given to how war is an incredibly widespread and ubiquitous cultural force.

Thinking further about war movies as "social indicators" and the reciprocal potential "dialogues" they may encourage, Langford argues:

> The evolution of war films is marked perhaps more directly than any other [genre] by developments in the world beyond the frame … changing perceptions of particular wars and of war itself, arising from cumulative shared cultural experiences of different conflicts and their embedded politics, elicit unusually direct effects in the shifting tenor, iconography and generic verisimilitudes of war films. (107)

This reciprocity between the world "beyond the frame" and real conflicts becomes even more complicated when considering that, as Rosi Braidotti states, "The post-Cold War world has not only seen a dramatic increase in warfare, but also a profound transformation of the practice of war"

(122); equally as troubling, as the headline for *The New York Times* article "U.S. War Footprint Grows in Middle East, With No Endgame in Sight" makes clear, the American military is not only expanding but has no intention of "ending" any of the conflicts it is embroiled in (Hubbard and Gordon 2017). It is important then to closely examine the deeply pervasive war film in order to unpack the "specific discourses" present and the rhetorical "lessons" that the films themselves teach via the audience's "shared experience," especially in the midst of this "dramatic increase," expanded "war footprint," and the "profound transformation" of war via the inclusion of Internet-enabled technologies. Movies about the real or imagined conflicts become extremely useful documents to analyze because they do an excellent job encapsulating an audience's attitudes and emotions, a potential time capsule of their zeitgeist that captures the "tenor" and "iconography" around the particular conflicts that surround the production and viewing of a movie.

Importantly, as hooks writes, "Movies do not merely offer us the opportunity to reimagine the culture we most intimately know on the screen, they make culture" (12). Filmmakers do not simply "tap into the events, fears, fantasies, and hopes of an era"; films are not just records or reflections, but are active creators and/or reinforcers of cultural values, wishes and concerns. War affects movies but movies also affect war. More specifically, cinema and warfare have a long and reciprocal history, wherein the technology and iconography of Hollywood filmmaking has been harnessed, or at the very least monitored, by the American military in order to shape civilian culture. As an example of Hollywood's effectiveness Der Derian points to the example of the military base STRICOM (Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation Command) as one example of where the American military comes to "Hollywood to find the tools and skills for simulating and, if necessary, fighting the wars of the future" (*Virtuous War* 163). The American military does not just borrow from Hollywood, however; they also give to, and create with, the American moviemaking industry. Lawrence H. Suid's *Guts and Glory*, a thorough recounting of the overlaps between the American military and Hollywood,[2] contends that

> the symbiotic relationship between filmmakers and the military began almost as soon as the new medium became a part of American life. The armed forces quickly realized that movies in which they appeared would aid their recruiting campaigns as well as their efforts to inform the public and Congress of their activities and procedures. (12)

Martin Barker's compact summary in *A Toxic Genre* reminds us that the Office of War Information was formed in the 1940s in order to undertake "the development for using film (identified as the medium most likely to reach soldiers and the general population) to propagate its messages" (9) and therefore "any understanding of the 'genre' of Hollywood war movies has to begin by seeing the conditions of their production as an institutionalised compromise" (11). This "development" continues to this day, as the American military has set up a series of liaisons and offices tasked with coordinating with Hollywood.[3] Using these lines of communication, many war films are given time to shoot in military spaces and/or given military personnel as "technical advisors"; as one example among many, the movie *Stealth*, discussed in Chapter 5 of this text, was given time to shoot on the aircraft carriers USS *Abraham Lincoln* and USS *Carl Vinson* by the US Navy (Cook 2004; Fahey 2004). However, this involvement is obviously self-serving and potentially dangerous: citing David Robb's 2002 text *Operation Hollywood*, Barker points out how "the Pentagon successfully steered film scripts in some very precise directions … [and] regularly overruled historically accurate elements of films in favour of what might enhance the military image" and in turn have "become virtual advertisements for 'America' and its military" (11). Again, this has long been the case: Suid states that the hundreds of Hollywood films released during and just after World War II "created the image of combat as exciting, as a place to prove masculinity, as a place to challenge death in a socially acceptable manner" and, by doing so, the "screen victories reinforced the image of the American military as all-conquering, all powerful, always right. In a real sense, then, Hollywood war films have helped justify war and the use of violence to achieve national goals" (12). Žižek updates this thought into the contemporary by arguing that "a series of meetings between White House advisors and senior Hollywood executives" was organized to synchronize "the war effort and [establish] how Hollywood could help in the 'war on terrorism' by getting the right ideological message across not only to the Americans, but also to the Hollywood public around the globe" (*Welcome to the Desert of the Real* 19). This coordination, he writes, is "the ultimate empirical proof that Hollywood does in fact function as an 'ideological state apparatus'" (19).

Considering what exactly an "ideological state apparatus" might be, it is useful to draw some lines between this text's use of "military," "the War Machine," the "State War Machine" and the "Total War Machine." This book's theoretical understanding of the War Machine and the military is taken primarily from Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand*

Plateaus (*ATP*) and Manuel De Landa's *War in the Age of Intelligence Machines* (*WAIM*) and, in more practical applications, is near synonymous with President Dwight D. Eisenhower's understanding of the Military Industrial Complex. To begin, Deleuze and Guattari explain that the "War Machine" is "a tool of the nomad. … Rather than the military (which is a State appropriation of the war machine), the war machine is a collection of nomad-warriors engaged in resistance to control, war being only a consequence—not the intended object" (*ATP* 420); David Heckman clarifies: "Unlike the military, the war machine is not influenced by the economic and political concerns of the State. The war machine is a 'grass roots' affair which bubbles up from common concerns for freedom to move, and as a result it is part and parcel of nomadic life" (para. 23). Mbembé in "Necropolitics" adds,

> War machines are made up of segments of armed men that split up or merge with one another depending on the tasks to be carried out and the circumstances. Polymorphous and diffuse organizations, war machines are characterized by their capacity for metamorphosis. … A war machine combines a plurality of functions. (32)

This is an important distinction to draw: the War Machine itself is an entity that is not necessarily designed for war, but is rather a collection of warriors that exist outside of geographical and State concerns. Because pre-Industrial nomad forces were significantly smaller and more fractured than larger States that were based in territory, as well as in expansive and permanent infrastructures, the nomad aimed "to destroy the State-form and city-form with which it collides" (*ATP* 418). Yet, as a rule, the State is more powerful and "developed" than the nomad force and subsumes and appropriates the War Machine; the War Machine then "changes in nature and function, since it is afterward directed against the nomad and all State destroyers, or else expresses relations between States, to the extent that a State undertakes exclusively to destroy another State or impose its aims upon it" (418). While the nomad-warriors are largely based in the organizational principle of lineage, Deleuze and Guattari maintain that within the archaic State and State War Machines "lineages remain very important, and numbers take on their own importance. But what moves to the forefront is a 'territorial' organization, in the sense that all the segments, whether of lineage, land, or number, are taken up by *an astronomical space or a geometrical extension* that overcodes them" (authors' italics 388). Such an appropriation is a commandeering of territory and mercenary action, and this new version of the

War Machine is what is meant by a "military" or a State War Machine: the military, by contrast, is an organization formed by the State specifically "to wage wars and immobilize adversaries (which are determined by the State)" (Heckman para. 21). The modern form of the Total War Machine beings when "the State apparatus appropriates the war machine, *subordinates* it to its 'political' *aims*, and gives it war as its direct *object*" (*ATP* authors' italics 420). More, the factors that make State War into Total War are closely connected to capitalism: "It has to do with the investment of constant capital in equipment, industry, and the war economy, and the investment of variable capital in the population in its physical and mental aspects (both as war-maker and as victim of war)" (421). Total War is the result of what Manuel De Landa describes as "the slow militarisation of civilian society, a process in which schools, hospitals and prisons slowly came to adopt a form first pioneered in military camps and barracks, and factories came to share a common destiny with arsenals and armories" ("Economics, Computers and the War Machine" para. 1); the Total War Machine then is not just the hardware, soldiers, tactics, and command employed in direct conflicts, but is also a completely interdependent melding of the mechanics of civilian life, "a plurality of functions," to the needs of the military. This is precisely what Eisenhower warned against in his famous 1961 presidential parting speech in which he spoke at length about the establishment and dangers of the Military Industrial Complex, wherein the

> conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence – economic, political, even spiritual – is felt in every city, every Statehouse, every office of the Federal government. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. (para. 14)

This Military Industrial Complex, and the notion of Total War and the Total War Machine, has only expanded since 1961, and when considering the aforementioned symbiosis between Hollywood and the American military, the "compromise" that Barker mentions between viewers, producers, politicians and the military is indicative of the type of dense interweaving that results from the activation of a Total War Machine. At a very basic level, LaRocca points to the seemingly inherent overlap in the acts of making war and making a movie in that the two cultural forces "encode a shared lexicon of 'loading,' 'cocking,' 'aiming,' and 'shooting,' among other familiar and evocative terms" (9).

Der Derian calls the expansion from the overlap of the two forces the "military-industrial-media-entertainment network" (786) which recognizes all forms of military entertainment, video games, TV, movies, etc., as being a function of Žižek's "ideological state apparatus" (19); this is best exemplified "when the simulations used to train fighter pilots show up in the special effects of the film *Independence Day* [and] four-person Marine fire-teams train with the videogame 'Doom'" (Der Derian 786). Expanding from this, De Landa, in *Deleuze: History and Science*, explains that an army "should be viewed as an *assemblage of assemblages*, that is, an entity produced by the recursive application of the part-to-whole relation" (author's italics 68). Here, and in my previous work, I've used the term "assemblage" to refer to the hybridization created by a person's organic body and their Bodies without Organs, with Bodies without Organs acting as "an abstracted projection of a person's identity that underlies the physical organism/body" (Tucker 19) that Deleuze and Guattari highlight as "adjacent to [the organism] and … continuously in the process of constructing itself (*ATP* 164).[4] When the bodies and Bodies without Organs join with other virtual and physical technologies, they form a larger assemblage; when that assemblage bonds with another assemblage, say in an army, they form an "assemblage of assemblages"; when that army joins with the movie-producing and movie-watching-audience assemblages, the "military-industrial-media-entertainment network," which also includes functions of military and civilian assemblages, then we begin to see larger assemblages merging with larger assemblages and the expansive Total War Machine at work, a military force that cuts across forms and informs culture on a massive scale.

This leads to a global production and reproduction of war, with the war film serving as a key influencer in shaping the attitudes of war making and State making (patriotism) in its audiences. The constant ubiquity of Total War should be united with the definition of the war film genre given earlier in this introduction and acknowledges the deep and extensive tendrils war has as a cultural power. As well, given the military's history of active involvement in war films, movies then are a component of that Total War Machine, spreading and reinforcing the rhetoric of the State War Machine.[5] Cinema, as a double-edged reciprocal reflector of conflicts and constructor of culture, is especially effective because it is so similar, in its use of the camera and visual image, to the modern State War Machine: as Paul Virilio argues in *War and Cinema*, contemporary warfare is "a war of pictures and sounds [that is] replacing the war of objects (projectiles and missiles)" (5); he writes that the State War

Machine becomes a "watching machine" fueled by drones, "reconnaissance aircraft and remote seeing satellites" so that "the eye's function is the function of the weapon" (4). LaRocca adds: "The camera is not just a mechanical, chemical, or digital means of representing war; it is also, necessarily, a component of war machinery. And the camera has become, progressively with each new war, as necessary—or at least as prevalent— as the guns that shape the unfolding course of events" (9). With this involvement of the camera in "real-life" warfare, war movies, as similarly visual documents, often based in the spectacle of combat, can potentially become a weaponized form of cultural rhetoric, a successful civilian-watcher element of a Total War Machine.

To this text's focus, Eisenhower speaks to the specific "technological revolution" he sees in which "research has become central; it also becomes more formalized, complex, and costly" (para. 16), situating part of this revolution in the costly and State-funded labs where "for every old blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers" (para. 15). The chapters in this text stem at least originally from the tangled military-civilian history of the "electronic computer" and the Internet. Both Christos J.P. Moschovitis and Johnny Ryan have written thorough texts that outline the basic trajectory of the Internet[6] and its integration into civilian life, so we do not need to rehash that here.[7] However, as they and popular texts like Andrew Blum's *Tubes* and Katie Hafner and Matthew Lyon's *Where Wizards Stay Up Late* demonstrate, while the Internet was perhaps not immediately used for military purposes, the funding for creating and maintaining it and its infrastructure came through military channels; in addition, a large percentage of the small population of pre-1990 users would have had roots in the military.[8] The central premise of Manuel De Landa's 1991 *WAIM*, a book returned to multiple times throughout this text, is that the American State War Machine had been using computers and the Internet as a central part of its organizing and tactical principles, and here it is worth noting that by the time the technology exploded in the mid-1990s into a common-use, civilian one,[9] the American military had been using it for nearly three decades. In fact, within the first Gulf War, it was the Internet, at least in part, that granted the American State War Machine its spectacular dominance; in support of this thought, Mbembé states that "the growing gap between high-tech and low-tech means of war has never been as evident as in the Gulf War … [where] a military-technological revolution … has multiplied the capacity for destruction

in unprecedented ways" (29). The State War Machine expanded then to include "smart bombs and bombs coated with depleted uranium (DU), high-tech stand-off weapons, electronic sensors, laser-guided missiles, cluster and asphyxiation bombs, stealth capabilities, unmanned aerial vehicles, and cyberintelligence [that] quickly crippled the enemy's capabilities" (29). While this book will give some basic histories of Internet-enabled weapons like the ones Mbembé lists, alongside analysis of how the Internet itself has been repurposed toward the Total War Machine, its focus will be on the digitally networked American State War Machine and the contemporary notion of Network-Centric Warfare (NCW), which Mary Sterpka King outlines in depth in "Preparing the Instantaneous Battlefield". She asserts that NCW is "designed to mobilize information into a competitive fighting advantage through the networking of operations and forces" and "signifies the integration of human systems and technical capacity into a networked, joint-command structure" (305). Such an approach to warfare demands that all elements of that "networked, joint-command structure" must "observe, orient, decide, act, loop" (318), and depends upon a pervasive networking of all elements of the Total War Machine, using the "public" Internet or an Internet created by a military, in order to link human soldiers to their technologies (and provide information about weather, enemy conditions, and mission updates, for example), and bond those soldier assemblages to other parts of the chain of command. Such a structure also allows for networked simulations of battles (wargames) to be run and considered, granting greater tactical knowledge to the Total War Machine (321). From this, this complete interweaving between civilian and military that is present in the Total War Machine is because, as Tsirigotis continues,

> Warfare, as society, is mainly based on the impeccable use of networks through which information flows undisturbed to every operational level: to the higher command echelon and to fighting squadrons, as well. This constitutes the kernel of Information warfare and which has already been implemented in real life battlefield heralding fundamental changes to war paradigm. (389)

All the connection, production, distribution, and consumption of digital information within the Total War Machine relies on some form of the Internet, and, with this understanding, the porous relationship between the civilian and military Internet mirrors the war film's similar ability to slide easily over the barriers of the two.

The war film and the Internet also overlap in their pervasive and persuasive nature, as both are core examples of the Total War Machine enabled by the Military Industrial Entertainment network. Analyzing the use of the Internet in war films then provides, at first, an initial site to analyze and/or critique the American military's use of the technology as well as to begin to understand the Internet's impact on the genre of the war film. Both Jean Baudrillard in *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place* (1991) and Paul Virilio in *Strategy of Deception* (2000) argue that the American State War Machine was already based firmly in the principles of war-as-simulacra by the first Gulf War, principles that pushed both the fighting and the depictions of "real-life" war into the realm of unreal model and constantly mediated simulation. In an effort to fight a war without having to fight a war, Virilio sees a shift toward a "clean" war, "beyond the principle of the *just war*," aimed at "ensuring victory without bloodshed, at least of reducing the symbolic/media impact of the blood" (author's italics 53). This leads to what he calls the "tele-war," one that uses many of the principles of a Network-Centric Warfare, based on "information warfare" that is dependent on satellites gathering data from around the globe in real time, with computers performing "rapid analysis" on that data (18). This "information" would have largely been produced, consumed and distributed by the Internet, creating a culture of "over-information" (48), one in which the American military was constantly bombarded with information, while civilians, safely away from conflict, were also immersed in a constant stream of information (as well as disinformation, Virilio points out) about the distant combat. All this culminated in a dystopic version of McLuhan's global village built on the constant "interactive feedback between the global and local" (48). Little has changed in 2017: this unwavering feedback, running alongside "the guidance of missiles using 'electronic warfare,'" parallels and utilizes the globalizing nature of the Internet, and its focus on the binary logic of its software and hardware underpinnings; problematically, as well, this "electronic warfare" is based on a reduction of the world, via the militarized gaze of tactics, strategy and the literal aiming scope of the weapon, into digital units. Extending Deleuze and Guattari's explanations of how new technologies affect the State War Machine, the State War Machines of the 1990s and beyond, aided by the Internet and virtual weaponry, "overcoded" the segments of its battlefields (populations, resources, landscapes) with numerical, rather than

the older "territorial," organization. There has been an increasing exaggeration of this overcoding post-9/11, with the "war on terrorism" and the rise of non-territorial States of terrorist groups like al-Qaeda, ISIS and Boko Haram, where groups do not fight or define their sovereignty by national borders, as an older State War Machine might, but rather by a decentralized and non-geographical notion of ideology. To this end Mbembé argues:

> An important feature of the age of global mobility is that military operations and the exercise of the right to kill are no longer the sole monopoly of states, and the "regular army" is no longer the unique modality of carrying out these functions. Instead, a patchwork of overlapping and incomplete rights to rule emerges, inextricably superimposed and tangled, in which different de facto juridical instances are geographically interwoven and plural allegiances … abound. (31)

It should come as no surprise then that the integration of a popular Internet into a civilian life has made it so that these terrorist groups' War Machines often use the civilian networks of the Internet to distribute, communicate, recruit and globally reinforce their "patchwork" and "geographically interwoven and plural allegiances."[10] Chapter 6 of this text explores in more detail the fact that State War Machines, and to a lesser extent terrorist groups, utilize the civilian Internet, and its inherent public networked nature, as a weapon to attack other States' civilian and military infrastructures in acts of cyberwarfare; as Klaus-Gerd Giesen reminds, older notions of warfare, sovereignty and territory are scrambled "due to the decentralized nature of the Internet, [where] any malware can actually cross many borders within a fraction of a second before finding its target" (66). Der Derian worries deeply about the Internet's proliferation in the Total War Machine, as he sees it as one, and perhaps the primary, example of "new technologies of imitation and simulation as well as surveillance and speed [that have] collapsed the geographical distance, chronological duration, the gap itself between the reality and virtuality of war" (774). With this, "new media, generally identified as digitized, interactive, networked forms of communication, now exercise a global effect if not ubiquitous presence through real time access … war reaches not only into every living room but splashes onto every screen, TV, computer and cinema" (775). The Internet, as a part of the Total

War Machine, ensures not only that both civilians and the military weaponize the Internet, but that the battlefield and spaces of war are everywhere, at all times.

While the Internet has generated virtual worlds that have transformed the Total War Machine, so too have cinema and the war film transmogrified the understanding and justifications for war. In Paul Patton's introduction to *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, Baudrillard is said to have flagged this new warfare as "the birth of a new kind of military apparatus which incorporates the production and circulation of images as well as the power to direct the action of bodies and machines" (5). This centers upon the actions of stripping out images of bloody (actual) warfare because it doesn't fit into "the script of … [a] high-tech clean war" (13) constructed in order to maintain the support of those civilians at home. This then completely destroys the actual violent events of war, as "the involution and encrustation of the event in and by information" (48) eradicates it by suffocating the actual real victims and actions within war; within this destruction, civilians "remain fascinated by the evidence of the montage of … war with which we are inoculated everywhere: through the eyes, the senses and in discourse" (68). This focus on the eradicating and distancing power of the image in the State War Machine parallels the cinematic images created within war films, "montages of war," and the similar construction of warfare within Hollywood movies. Using as an example the overlapping montage of drone warfare imagery in both the State War Machine and the war film, military intelligence officer Lieutenant Colonel Douglas A. Pryer, in "The Rise of the Machines," writes that he was scared that "because of the small, gray viewing screens that came with these drones as well as their limited loiter time … we were physically removed from the action, maybe such an event would not affect us much. Would it look and feel, I wondered, like sitting at home, a can of Coke in hand, watching a war movie?" (14). On the other side of this, soldiers engaged in "real" war and combat were left with "an impression of the surreal, the hyperreal, or the unreal" wherein "even soldiers who experienced combat firsthand will sometimes later relate incredulously that at the time, even on the battlefield, life seemed 'like a Hollywood blockbuster'" (LaRocca 4). As "real" war footage/experience and the war film become increasingly identical, movies become a form of virtual simulation aimed primarily at civilians, with the filmic treatment of "real" footage that adds verisimilitude to the movies further blurring the real and the fictional to the point where the "real" becomes "a war movie."

Speaking further to the modern digitization of war, Virilio describes the use of satellites to gather information, computer simulation and the increased reliance on long-range air strikes as coming closer and closer to "acts of war without war" (*Pure War* 32). This text argues strongly that movies are potential "acts of war without war," are modes for (mostly) civilians to access and experience war, and to achieve some form of sensory and narrative similarity to that of actual warfare, without actually having to physically engage. Baudrillard goes further, arguing that "we have a pressing need for simulation, even that of war … what we require is the aphrodisiac spice of the multiplication of fakes and the hallucination of violence, for we have a hallucinogenic pleasure in all things" (75); Suid clarifies that "war films do more than serve as a means for vicariously experiencing the proximity of death, the romance, and the adventure of war. They offer an escape from reality, the same appeal that war itself offers those who are involved in combat" (6). With the aforementioned American military's active participation in Hollywood, including lending locales, technical know-how, and materiel to movies, war films themselves can give the illusion of reality, of involving "realistic" hardware and software in "realistic" environments. As such, there is a blurring between the fictional and non-fictional of the world that has, as mentioned previously, been used to promote a civilian involvement and justification for (ongoing and ever-present) war. The "pleasure" of the simulation, the "aphrodisiac spice" of escapist and "vicarious experience" are always created within a space of virtual unreality but also with the knowledge that the "choices" within Hollywood films are always also "distorted and clouded by a medium that, after all, places before its audiences a commodity emphasizing entertainment" (Scott 5). As LaRocca reminds us, "War films lie at the junction of two multibillion-dollar industrial complexes: the military and the movies. Thus, while governments around the world wage war overtly or covertly, Hollywood and other moviemakers continue to explore and celebrate the dynamic features and implications of war" (4). Not only does this cinematic commoditized document, a key output of the Military Industrial Entertainment network, reduce the real suffering of people and landscapes via a distancing and fictionalizing mediated representation, warping the ethics and attitudes around contemporary warfare, but these documents also form deeply influential scripts that affect how an everyday movie-watching audience relates to their Internet-enabled technologies.

The representation of technologies within war films has always been part of the spectacle of combat and an essential part of entertaining the movie-watching audience, and it deserves attention if only for that fact. However, more complexly, Mead, addressing the long history of militaries promoting the literal literacy of reading and writing as a means to empower their own armies, speaks to the emerging "literacies" that are required within the State War Machine as "new technologies and duties have emerged" in which the term "literacy" has shifted to "encompass whatever skills are needed to handle [those technologies and duties]" (60). Mead argues that "video games represent one of the more culturally prominent examples of a new sort of literacy" (60), and this text extends his thinking to contend that war movies grant the same "literacy" as video games to their audience; when returning to the focus of this text, war films that showcase the Internet and Internet-enabled technologies are creating "literacies" and making arguments about how a civilian user should relate to her/his technologies in his/her everyday life. In *Interfacing with the Internet in Popular Cinema*, I call this contemporary audience the machinic audience. Drawing from Deleuze and Guattari's sense of the word "machinic" as reflecting how identity is formed through the interaction of various invisible and visible infrastructural and conceptual machines, I define the machinic audience as the contemporary movie-watching audience, itself an example of an assemblage, that is "savvy to their soft and hard networks of networks … an audience comfortably draped in the virtuality of Web 2.0 … and [that] understands/appreciates/invites the digitization of themselves and the world around them."[11] Within my previous work, I argue that this hybridization within a modern movie watcher was largely a product of their physical body and their virtual Bodies without Organs (or avatars), and that film representations of such assemblages construct arguments, both positive and negative, around Internet usage. The most positive version of this assemblage is built with what Deleuze and Guattari would call full Bodies without Organs, entities that the authors characterize as "intense," "unified" and having the potential to be "full of gaiety, ecstasy and dance" (*ATP* 150), which ultimately create a creature that is "open and allows other Bodies without Organs and information/sensation to flow through it" (Tucker 20). By this, Deleuze and Guattari contend that identity is a rhizomatic collection of Bodies without Organs that interweave with the physical body to produce a person's self.

Such an understanding of identity is synonymous with Hayles' "posthuman," a modern construct that is a symbiotic combination of biological and technological, "an amalgam, a collection of heterogeneous components, a material-informational entity whose boundaries undergo continuous construction and reconstruction" (*HWBPh* 3). In many ways, Hayles' posthuman owes a great debt to Donna Haraway's "cyborg" that she established in "A Cyborg Manifesto" (first presented in 1983; collected in her text *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* 1991).[12] Haraway allows for the cyborg to incorporate the virtual or "fictional" elements of technology, stating that "a cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (291). This hybrid, like the posthuman, is a network of different technological and biological components, Bodies with and without Organs, which are in contact with other humans who are also networks of technological and biological components. Considering all this, what is most important when utilizing the concept of the posthuman/cyborg is recognition that such an entity is reliant upon an interdependence between physical bodies and technological elements: there can be neither a physical-only version nor a technology-only version, and the unbalancing of one side of the material-informational/technological partnership generates unhealthy forms of identity.

This book then unpacks the linking together of the machinic audience and the Total War Machine at the site of the war film genre, in particular with the understanding that each is an individual "machinic phylum" and they join together to form a larger machinic phylum. For Deleuze and Guattari, a machinic phylum is dependent on "singularities," which De Landa describes as when technological-biological assemblages bond with other such assemblages in a self-organizing fashion until there is a large system in which all become part of a "common phylogenetic lineage" that culminates in a machine (in Deleuze and Guattari's sense of the term, that "blurs the distinction between organic and non-organic life" (*WAIM* 7). This assemblage of assemblages is the machinic phylum, which Deleuze and Guattari clarify further: "The machinic phylum is materiality, natural or artificial, and both simultaneously; it is matter in movement, in flux, in variation, matter as a conveyor of singularities and traits of expression" (*ATP* 409). In its more positive forms, De Landa sees the machinic phylum as a unifying process: "The idea of a