



R I C H A R D G R U S I N

Premediation

Remediation and Premediation

IN OUR 1999 BOOK *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Jay Bolter and I defined “remediation” as the double logic according to which media (particularly but not exclusively digital media) refashion prior media forms.¹ In response to the question of what was new about digital media at the end of the twentieth century, we proposed that these media were new precisely because of the ways in which they refashioned older media. Specifically, we examined the ways in which such media as computer graphics, video games, virtual reality, and the World Wide Web define themselves by borrowing from, paying homage to, critiquing, and refashioning their predecessors, principally television, film, photography, and painting, but also print. Video and computer games, we argued, remediate film by styling themselves as “interactive movies,” incorporating standard Hollywood cinematic techniques. Virtual reality remediates film as well as perspective painting. Digital photography remediates the analog photograph. The Web absorbs and refashions almost every previous visual and textual medium, including television, film, radio, and print. Furthermore, we argued that older media remediate newer ones within the same media economy. The traditional Hollywood cinema, for example, has responded to the challenge of digital media in a variety of different ways: by employing computer graphics in otherwise conventional films, by creating films entirely with computer animation, or by replacing the logic of linear narrative with more iterative, gamelike logics. Television, too, has made such extensive use of new media that TV screens often look like Web pages. Remediation, we suggested, seemed to be a characteristic not only of contemporary media but of visual media at least since the Renaissance, with its invention of linear-perspective painting—as evidenced by the recent interest among art historians in the role that optical devices (including the camera lucida, camera obscura, and photographic projection) played in the history of realistic painting. Each medium seems to follow this pattern of borrowing and

refashioning other media, and rivalry as well as homage seem always to be at work.

In *Remediation* we took Kathryn Bigelow's 1995 film *Strange Days* as exemplifying the often contradictory logic of mediation at work at the end of the twentieth century, tracing out what we described as the double logic of remediation by which contemporary culture seeks simultaneously to proliferate and to erase mediation, to eliminate all signs of mediation in the very act of multiplying them. In 1999 we argued that Bigelow presented a vision of the near future that was really an account of the double logic of remediation at the historical moment of the film's production and release. *Strange Days* imagines an idealized form of remediation as a perceptual immediacy that would bypass or erase all mediation by connecting one consciousness to another, even while the film itself simultaneously presents a world in which media and mediation are everywhere (including the recording and playback devices that produce and transmit the "clip" that is a piece of another's perceptual experience).

Although we were, I would insist, correct to single out *Strange Days* as an instance of remediation as a cultural dominant at the end of the twentieth century, we did not at that point recognize how this double logic—if not precisely nearing its end—was at least on the verge of being re-mediated according to another logic, a logic of *premediation* in which the future has always already been *pre-mediated*. In other words, we failed to understand fully the way in which *Strange Days* was already participating in a logic of premediation insofar as it was pre-mediating the United States (particularly Los Angeles) nearly five years into the future. Furthermore, we failed to recognize that *Strange Days* was also participating in a logic of premediation insofar as it remediated future media practices and technologies. In depicting the "wire" as a device that records one person's sensory perception of the past, according to the logic of appropriate media forms, and makes it available in the future for playback by another person, through means of appropriate media technologies, *Strange Days* not only participated in the double logic of remediation at the end of the twentieth century but anticipated the logic of premediation in imagining future media technologies as remediations of current ones. Although such futuristic technologies might promise to bypass mediation, they don't. Bigelow makes explicit the fact that wire clips are "produced" and marketed according to existing media genres (e.g., pornography, snuff films, home movies). What the wire more accurately bypasses is not mediation but rather projection or exhibition. Wire clips play back within the consciousness of the viewer or user; like William Gibson's cyberspace, the wire is a "consensual hallucination." *Strange Days* is itself a film, publicly screened and projected in 1995, that imagines a kind of internalized, private form of film at the end of the second millennium. As such it depicts an intensified expression of the desire for immediacy in cinema, in which the mediation of public projection,

screening, and exhibition are eliminated in favor of a prerecorded, private perceptual experience for the viewer.

Like *Strange Days*, Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002) also portrays the future, albeit roughly half a century out rather than half a decade. Like Bigelow, Spielberg imagines a technological medium that works by recording sensory or neural experience for playback. But in *Minority Report*, rather than capturing past neural experience for playback in the future, the technology captures "precognitions" of the future for playback in the present—for the purpose of preventing the recorded events from becoming actual history, to prevent the future from becoming the past. Furthermore, where *Strange Days* imagines a private, individualized form of mediation, in *Minority Report* precognition is a fundamentally public medium, a distributed network of biological, technological, social, and medial actants. "The wire" in *Strange Days* records the sensory experience of a single individual, for playback to a single individual; the technology of precognition in *Minority Report* records the distributed cognition of three "precognitives," or occasionally the "minority report" of one of them, to be publicly displayed within the headquarters of the Pre-Crime unit. Technically, the recording device would seem to work very similarly to the wire in *Strange Days*. Even though the device in *Minority Report* is supposed to be recording murders that will be committed in the future, the sensory experience that it records is *past* experience, that is, the past mental experience of the three precogs. But unlike the wire, the events that are recorded and played back are not themselves past events—they are future events, premediated murders that the precogs and Pre-Crime make it possible to prevent. The logic of remediation insists that there was never a past prior to mediation; all mediations are remediations, in that mediation of the real is always a mediation of another mediation. The logic of premediation, on the other hand, insists that the future itself is also already mediated, and that with the right technologies—in this case the distributed cognition made possible by the hybridized institution of Pre-Crime, with its cyborgian precogs, nurtured in the appropriate physical environment and attached to the correct hardware and software—the future can be remediated before it happens. This remediation is not only formal but reformatory. Insofar as capital crime can be prevented, precognition allows for the remedying of the future, the prevention of the crime of murder through premediation.

Like *Strange Days*, then, *Minority Report* imagines a technology that is direct and immediate; also like *Strange Days*, *Minority Report* depicts a world awash in mediation. Detective John Anderton (Tom Cruise) lives in an apartment with transparent screens for the playback of home-movie discs of his dead son and ex-wife, clips in which the images are not contained on the two-dimensional plane of the screen but come toward the viewer into three-dimensional space, while never quite entering it. Cereal boxes have cartoon

animation (audio and visual) on the front; newspapers have up-to-the-minute, self-refreshing audio-video clips as illustrations; the malls are full of interactive audiovisual ads that greet consumers by name as they come toward them in three-dimensional space. In addition there is a kind of virtual-reality arcade that provides users with fantasy experiences that, like the wire in *Strange Days*, work through neural connections, bypassing projection and screening. But despite the ubiquity of media technologies in the near-future worlds of both films, there is an important difference between the two technologies, between the wire and the precogs. The precogs' premediations of murder are not (like the wire clips) simply recorded for private consumption; they are monitored in real time and then displayed in a public, quite hypermediated fashion—exhibited on interactive transparent screens, any part of which can be magnified or minimized, and connected with networked databases that can be searched and scanned in moments.

To emphasize further the fully premediated character of this imagined U.S. society in the middle of the twenty-first century, Spielberg uses a TV commercial for Pre-Crime very early in the film as a means of initial narrative exposition for the viewer, showing the audience of the film as well as the TV audience in the world of the film about the history and workings of Pre-Crime. The force of this form of ubiquitous premediation (that our knowledge of the future, as well as of the past, is already mediated) is underscored by the fact that the very first images the viewer sees onscreen are those of a premediated crime displayed on the monitors of the Pre-Crime unit—not images of the unmediated real-time world of the film but of the premediated world of a crime that is about to be committed. That is, the first images the viewer sees are cinematic images of the mediated and screened perceptions of the precogs rather than of the world of 2054 in which these images are being screened. Unlike *Strange Days*, which imagines the wire and its clips as a form of mediation that marks a potential end to projection and public screening or exhibition, *Minority Report* imagines the precogs' clips as a way to premeditate the future and to project and screen it publicly in the present.

I will return to *Minority Report* in the concluding section of this essay, but for now I want to turn my attention to the way in which the logic of premediation is functioning more broadly in the current U.S. media environment. More particularly I want to take up the role of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, in shaping this new cultural dominant in U.S. (and increasingly global) media.

Remediating 9/11

The double logic of remediation seems even more evident today than when we began to write in 1996. Remediation was nowhere more evident than in media

coverage of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the subsequent “War on Terrorism,” not only in Western television networks like CNN but also increasingly in its non-Western imitator Al-Jazeera. Global networked news media repeatedly demonstrated the double logic of remediation in televisual space by simultaneously multiplying mediation in the now-familiar collage-like look pioneered by CNN (and adopted by Fox, CNBC, MSNBC, and almost all U.S. news stations) and erasing the evidence of mediation in presenting the immediacy of the extreme close-up of the Twin Towers in flame. Media coverage during and after 9/11, especially in regard to the destruction of the World Trade Center, combined the immediacy of television monitoring with the hypermediacy of the Web. The double logic of these remediations worked simultaneously to erase the televisual medium in our act of witnessing the horror and to multiply mediation through split screens, scrolling headlines, the importation of radio feeds, cellphones, videophones, and so forth.

In some important sense, 9/11 (I use the U.S. form of the date for its inescapable allusion to 911, the telephone number one dials in an emergency in the United States) signaled a shift in the U.S. cultural or media dominant from remediation to premediation. Of course, the events of 9/11 did not in and of themselves produce a total shift in our cultural logic of mediation; they proved less a categorical break or rupture than a kind of watershed moment, a sea change not fully evident until some time after it occurs. As we have seen, the intensity of the double logic of remediation expressed during 9/11—the immediacy of the bombing, burning, and collapse of the Twin Towers coupled with the hypermediacy of its mediation on screens across the world—made 9/11 in some sense the paradigmatic global remediation event. Insofar as 9/11 has been called the “first live global media event,” for the United States it might also be seen to mark the *last* live global media event, or at least U.S. media seemed to want to make it such in its obsession with premediating the future in the months that followed. Premediation is in some sense a fundamentally American response to 9/11, in which the United States seeks to try to make sure that it never again experiences live a catastrophic event like this that has not already been premediated. In other words, 9/11 can be seen to have marked an end to (or at least a repression or sublimation of) the U.S. cultural desire for immediacy fueled by the dot.com hysteria of the 1990s and to have replaced it with a desire for a world in which the immediacy of the catastrophe, the immediacy of disaster, could not happen again—because it would always already have been premediated. In a kind of cultural reaction formation, the desire or demand since 9/11 has been to make sure that when the future comes it has already been remediated, to see the future not as it emerges immediately into the present but before it ever happens.

My claim that the current media regime is preoccupied with the premediation of the future runs counter to Paul Virilio’s contention in *Open Sky* that

our current historical moment is “monochronic.” Virilio contends that the invention of cinema led almost inevitably to today’s telecommunication technologies and networked media, which work to collapse space and time into a moment of instantaneity and thus to produce a preoccupation not with the past or the future but with the present, the “time freeze” of “real time”:

With the instant photoprint enabling invention of the cinematographic sequence, *time will not stand still again*. The film strip, the film reel, and later, the *real-time* video cassette of non-stop telesurveillance will all illustrate the incredible innovation of a continuous *time-light*. . . .

These days, the screen of real-time televised broadcasts is no longer a monochromatic filter like the one familiar to photographers which lets through a single colour only of the spectrum, but a *monochronic* filter which allows a glimpse only of the present.²

Identifying “time freeze, finally, in the real instant of the live television broadcast,” Virilio articulates a dystopian version of utopian claims that technologies of telecommunication bring people together across space through tele-action in the instantaneity of “real time.” Like 1990s techno-enthusiasts, Virilio is convinced that the era of networked satellite telecommunication eradicates what he sees as the interval of communication, the distance in time and space between the act of issuing a communication and the act of receiving or interpreting that communication. Both past and future are obliterated in favor of “the instant,” “real time,” “the present.” Furthermore, the “real time” of the present itself, he argues, is split between “the real time of our *immediate activities*—in which we act both here *and* now—and the real time of a *media interactivity* that privileges the ‘now’ of the time slot of the televised broadcast to the detriment of the ‘here,’ that is to say, of the space of the meeting place.”³ Although critical of the effects of such instantaneity, the production of “a personality split in time,” Virilio shares with the enthusiasts of telecommunication and digital technology the belief that these new technologies do indeed provide a fundamental break with prior technologies, as well as the intense preoccupation with the present and real time that was very much a feature of the ideology of technology—the utopian rhetoric of technological progress and determinism—at the end of the twentieth century.

But where dreams of real time were very much alive prior to 9/11, the televisual and perceptual immediacy of the catastrophe of 9/11 has caused, at least for the time being, a cultural hesitation about the immediacy of digital technology and has brought about in the (particularly televisual) media a concern not with the immediate present but with the premediated future. In asserting a shift in the televisual coverage of catastrophe, I do not mean to suggest that the desire to premeditate the future has suddenly emerged full-blown after

9/11, nor that it has confined itself to televisual news. Rather, premediation has (as the example of *Strange Days* suggests) been emerging over the course of the 1990s, and it may even prove to be a kind of unseen structural counterpart to the double logic of remediation, indeed perhaps to all new technologies.⁴ Still, there can be little question that the current U.S. media environment is preoccupied with the mediation not of the present or the immediate past but of the future.

An early expression of premediation can be found in the overwhelming American media hysteria about anthrax exposure in the days shortly after 9/11—despite the fact that the number of deaths caused by these “attacks” was minuscule in comparison, for example, to the magnitude of the AIDS epidemic, which gets only sporadic coverage in the U.S. media. The media response to anthrax exposures in Florida, New York, and Washington, D.C., suggests the way in which the role of the media—particularly the news media—has become increasingly to consist not of reporting what has already happened but of premediating what may happen next. Clearly related to a shift in news reporting from historically oriented technologies like print, photography, and film to such real-time technologies as video and the Internet (a shift already well under way by 1990), news media have begun to give up on—or perhaps more accurately to subordinate—their historical role in favor of a prophetic or predictive role of reporting on what might happen. At the current historical moment, American news media remediate the past in order to premeditate the future. So, the anthrax scare became an obsession of the media not for the damage it had done but for the damage it could do in the future, for the threat it might become. In order that the news media would not be surprised as it had been by 9/11, it was imperative that the fullest extent of the national security threat from anthrax be premediated before it ever happened, or even if it never did. And further, it was not accidental that this premediated coverage of the future superseded more traditional coverage of the present or recent past.

The anthrax scare underscored that one of the indirect consequences of acts of irrational or random violence is to force people to reexamine what they take for granted—business as usual, day-to-dayness. Thus anthrax preoccupied U.S. media in part because of its mode of delivery through the Postal Service; the routine act of opening the mail had become a potential threat to one’s life. Because such acts interrupt and challenge one’s sense of business as usual, of the ordinary or the appropriate, they often motivate people to feel the need to establish, or reestablish, their sense of why things are the way they are, of what is truly important. In cases like the anthrax scare, where the perpetrator was (and years later, still is) unknown, the media not only tries to premeditate the next terrorist attack but also becomes part of the juridico-disciplinary apparatus involved in the investigation and (anticipated) apprehension of the people responsible for these acts of terror.⁵

The role of the media as part of the U.S. disciplinary apparatus was nowhere more explicit than in the challenge to the everydayness of American life posed in the fall of 2002 by the serial sniper killings in and around the Baltimore–Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. This sense of the disruption of business as usual produced by the snipers was reinforced by the news media in print, on the Internet, and especially on TV, which interrupted its daily schedules with the creation of the newest reality news shows (“The Anthrax Scare” or “D.C. Snipers”), complemented with 24-7 coverage by means of multiple crawls on the bottom of the screen. In the overwhelming desire to identify and apprehend these terrorists, the public often loses sight of the news media’s participation in the fabric or network of forces out of which such acts of terror emerge. In a distributed form of premediation, print, radio, TV, and Internet media; local, state, and federal police; the snipers and the public—all participated in the same heterogeneous social and technical disciplinary formation. The news media did not cover the police or the sniper as distinct autonomous entities but rather participated as actors in the investigation and capture of the snipers; in the same way, the police, with their prescheduled briefings and news conferences and their official media communication, participated as actors in the practices and schedules of networked media. What was distinctive about this media event was the extent to which the snipers themselves were both part of and made possible by the news media, in which they participated not only as viewers of their own mediation but also as programmers (in the participatory sense of today’s networked media and “reality TV”). Indeed, the snipers ultimately proved instrumental in their own identification and apprehension, through their communication in letters at the scene of the crime or prescheduled phone calls to the police, and in continuing to commit the murders themselves. No murder, no crime, no police, no law enforcement, no media. But one could say the same of any of these elements, without which the sniper crisis and the anthrax scare would not have been the particular events that they were. At the current historical moment in the United States, acts of terror like those of the D.C. snipers are not only acts of crime or violence but also their remediation in televisual media coverage and programming. Domestic terrorists today do not exist without expert analyses by professors of psychology or criminal justice, retired detectives or undercover agents, print and magazine journalists; in addition, terrorists also serve as agents of their own capture and discipline through their premediation both in the media and by police and other law enforcement agencies.

In the post-9/11 logic of premediation, terrorism stands for the catastrophic or traumatic possibility of an act that has not been, or cannot be, premediated—what Derrida characterizes as “*l’a’venir*,” as opposed to the predictable future on which one can count and plan.⁶ Or perhaps another way to say this is that the shock of 9/11 produced the desire or determination never

to experience anything that has not already been premediated. Žižek and Baudrillard are perhaps only the most notable figures to remark upon the fact that catastrophes like planes crashing into skyscrapers had often been premediated in Hollywood disaster films;⁷ I would suggest, however, that this logic of cinematic premediation works differently from the logic of premediation in televisual media. That is, it is important not to deny or elide the specificity of 9/11, a specificity related not only to its human and nonhuman casualties but also psychologically to its surprise or unpredictability (not in terms of a general structural or imaginative possibility but in terms of the precise time and place and the particular human and nonhuman actants involved). While Žižek is right that before 9/11 we knew that terrorist acts in the United States were possible, indeed that we had even witnessed such acts in Hollywood films, this cinematic premediation differs both from the premediation of future media technologies in films like *Strange Days* and *Minority Report* and from televisual remediation of the destruction of the World Trade Center.

One difference between cinematic and televisual depictions of disaster involves the different visual logics of the two media. Geoff King has noted significant formal differences between cinematic depictions of the collapse of major American skyscrapers in movies like *Independence Day* (1996), *Armageddon* (1998), and *Fight Club* (1999), compared with televisual coverage of the collapse of the World Trade Center, particularly in terms of visual framing and the deployment of semiotic markers of the real.⁸ As King's analysis suggests, these fictional or imaginary cinematic remediations do not entail premediation in precisely the sense I am trying to describe in the post-9/11 media climate—whether visually, semiotically, or mediologically. Rather, these cinematic tours de force have more in common with what Angela Ndalanian, following Tom Gunning's influential formulation, has called "the 1990s cinema of attractions" of special effects.⁹

Another difference between cinematic and televisual depictions of catastrophe involves psychological or structural differences between the media of television and film. In an essay from 1990, Mary Ann Doane argues compellingly that "in its structural emphasis upon discontinuity and rupture, it often seems that television itself is formed on the model of catastrophe."¹⁰ Taking as her chief examples such late-1980s catastrophes as the 1986 *Challenger* explosion, a 1987 Detroit Northwest Airlines crash, and 1988's Hurricane Gilbert, she sees real-time, liveness, and instantaneity as key elements of televisual catastrophe, which works by interrupting the predictability and reassurance of regularly scheduled programming. For Doane, the live coverage of catastrophe on television functions both to generate anxiety and to suppress it. At the beginning of the 1990s, televisual catastrophe worked to bring the audience into immediate contact with a "real" that disrupted the normal and the everyday, even while it was "characterized by everything which it is

said not to be—it is expected, predictable, its presence crucial to television's operation."¹¹ Even though it cannot account for how the scale of a traumatic catastrophe like 9/11 would be able to shift the focus of televisual catastrophe away from the present and toward the future, Doane's analysis of how television news generates and suppresses anxiety by both disrupting and perpetuating the everyday and the predictable helps to illuminate further the difference between televisual premediation and the kind of cinematic depictions of spectacular destruction cited by Baudrillard and Žižek. Because of the repetitive structure of the everyday built into televisual programming, the repeated premediation of future disasters or catastrophes works to guard against the recurrence of a trauma like 9/11 by maintaining, as Doane suggests of televisual catastrophe, an almost constant low level of fear.¹²

Thus, even though it is true that the catastrophe of 9/11 was covered live on television, radio, and the Web, especially the second crash and the burning and collapse of the Twin Towers, this global media event was not premediated in the same sense that the anthrax scare or the sniper attacks became premediated or that the war against Iraq was premediated for more than a year. Although Žižek and Baudrillard see cinematic catastrophe as indicative of something like a collective terrorist or apocalyptic wish, the drive toward premediation in the current media climate more tellingly represents the media's own televisual war against terror. Just as the U.S. government multiplies and extends its own networks of political, investigative, and juridical practices to prevent the occurrence of another 9/11, so the media multiply or proliferate their own premediations of potential terror attacks, or war in Iraq, as a way to try to prevent the occurrence of another media 9/11. Like the U.S. government's establishment of a color-coded security system of terror alert, the media's preoccupation with premediating the future strives to maintain a low level of anxiety among the American public in order to protect them from experiencing the immediacy of another catastrophe like 9/11. The desire that no future event (war, snipers, terrorism, etc.) be unmediated is the desire to see, or more precisely to premeditate, the future, the desire that the future never be free from mediation.¹³ Premediation then differs from the double logic of remediation in that it represents not a desire for immediacy but rather a fear of immediacy, of the kind of extreme moment of immediacy or transparency that 9/11 produced, in which the burning and collapse of the Twin Towers were perceived as if free from their mediation by radio, TV, the Web, and so forth, even while these mediations were multiplying at an almost dizzying pace.

The Media Regime of Preemptive War

For American and in some sense global audiences as well, the most visible and powerful manifestation of the logic of premediation in the two years follow-

ing 9/11 was the onslaught of media coverage leading up to the war in Iraq. Beginning with the 2002 State of the Union Address, the Bush administration repeatedly played out the war against Iraq in print and televisual news media. Cynically, such premediations functioned to help ensure that the American public would return control of the Congress to Bush's Republican Party in the 2002 midterm elections. Equally cynically, however, this premediation of the war against Iraq allowed the networked news media to increase their ratings in the run-up to war as well as to engage in a kind of audience testing on how best to cover the war when it did occur. Thus we had the proliferation of premediated war shows like "Countdown to War" or "Showdown with Iraq" not only as a ploy for ratings but also as a way to help cable news networks like CNN, Fox, and CNBC determine how best to present the war to the American public to obtain the largest audience share.¹⁴ These cynical readings of media and political self-interest should not be underemphasized. But they do not in and of themselves explain away the logic of premediation; rather, they underscore the attraction of premediation to an American public whose sense of invincibility or invulnerability remains shaken by the events of 9/11.

The war against Iraq was premediated in almost every possible manifestation. It was premediated as a war in which the United States and Britain would go almost alone and as a war in which they would go in with the support of the United Nations. It was premediated as a war with a northern and a southern front, or one that would be waged primarily from the south. It was premediated as an overwhelming aerial assault leading to the immediate surrender of the Iraqi people, who would welcome the American liberators with open arms. It was premediated as a war that would lead quickly to a military coup, or the capture, murder, or exile of Saddam Hussein and his immediate circle. It was premediated (both in the U.S. media and on Al-Jazeera by Osama bin Laden) as an extended urban war in which U.S. and allied troops would engage in house-to-house, street-to-street combat with an entrenched Iraqi military and populace. It was premediated as a war in which Saddam Hussein would empty his arsenal of weapons of mass destruction—on invading soldiers, on his own people, on his oil wells, and on the Israelis. The aftermath of the war was premediated as well. Postwar Iraq was premediated as a nation ruled by a coalition of diverse ethnic groups; as a nation governed by a new Iraqi democracy; as the site of countless intranational conflicts and score-settling; as a nation ruled for one, three, or as many as five years by a government of the U.S. military; as a nation governed by a coalition of UN forces; or as the catalyst for massive unrest within the Middle East.

Although each of these scenarios had its own level of plausibility and its own set of motivations, one thing was consistent among them all—the way in which they participated in a logic of premediation in which the mediation of war and its aftermath always preceded the real, in which such real events as

war and its aftermath only occurred after they had also been remediated by networked media, by government spokesmen, and by the culture at large. This incessant premediation of the war helps to explain the sense of inevitability that preceded the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Premediation furnished the media logic of the Bush administration's doctrine of preemptive warfare. In a political regime of preemptive war, premediation became the dominant media regime—by premediating the war, remediateing it before it happens, the formal structure of U.S. news media effectively supported U.S. military doctrine, participating in the preemptive remediation of a future (premediated) war. That is, the Bush doctrine of preemptive war required a preemptive media plan, a premediation of the inevitable future (or of any number of possible inevitable futures, as long as they all led to war with Iraq). This doctrine of preemption—as opposed to the prior doctrine of deterrence—had been circulating in neoconservative circles at least since 1989; similarly premediation had been emerging over the course of the 1990s, often as remediation's unseen double. Whereas prior to 1989 we see a U.S. military regime oriented primarily toward the past, particularly to the Cold War aftermath of World War II, the premedial doctrine of preemptive war, as opposed to the more remedial doctrine of deterrence, looks to refashion not the past but the future.

In emphasizing the way premediation strives to preclude the possibility of an unmediated future, an unmediated real, I do not want to be misunderstood as rehearsing the Baudrillardian account of the precession of simulacra, an account that led him unsurprisingly to assert that the terrorist attacks of 9/11 were not real—although he acknowledged their singularity as symbolic events. Just as one of the three corollaries of remediation insists on the inseparability of reality and mediation, the reality of media, their materiality as objects of circulation within the world of humans and nonhumans, of society and of things, so the concept of premediation insists on the reality of the premediated future. But I also do not want to be misunderstood as saying that premediation predetermines the form of the real. Rather, by trying to premeditate as many of the possible worlds, or possible paths, as the future could be imagined to take, premediation works something like the logic of designing a video game; it is not necessarily about getting the future right as much as it is about trying to imagine or map out as many possible futures as could plausibly be imagined. Where a video or computer game only permits certain moves depending on where the player is in the space of the game, how far advanced she is in achieving the goal of the game, or the attributes of her avatar, within these premediated moves there are a large number of different possibilities available, most of which are encouraged by the protocols and reward systems built into the game.

Unlike prediction, premediation is not chiefly about getting the future right. Premediation is not like a weather forecast, which aims to predict cor-

rectly the weather for tomorrow or the weekend or the week ahead. In fact, it is precisely the proliferation of future scenarios that enables premediation to generate and maintain a low level of anxiety in order to prevent the possibility of a traumatic future. Furthermore, premediation differs from something like predicting the weather in a formal sense. Where the premediation of war in Iraq on cable news networks, for example, involved mediating any number of possible futures by means of the very formal features with which the war itself would be mediated (maps, retired generals, split-screen debates, video, etc.), a weather map does not premeditate tomorrow's storm in the way in which it will be mediated after it strikes but rather follows particular formal conventions of representing the forecast. The emerging conventions of premediation, on the other hand, require that the future be premediated in ways that are almost indistinguishable from the way the future will be mediated when it happens.

In addition to its affinities with the logic of video or computer games, the logic of premediation operates similarly to the politics of information networks like the Internet, which operates neither as a space of complete freedom nor as a controlled, predetermined, or precensored space but rather as a space where all future links and networks are already laid out and where users are able to navigate only according to possible paths (and where patterns of linking and networking make it much more likely that users will navigate according to some possible paths rather than others).¹⁵ But to say that the Internet is prenetworked or premediated in this way is not to say that any particular individual or collective uses of the World Wide Web, for example, are predetermined or ruled out but rather to say that one can only work within what the Internet has been constructed to allow, what has already been networked or premediated. Premediation is part of a heterogeneous media regime whose fundamental purpose is to preclude that no matter what tomorrow might bring, it will always already have been premediated. Premediation does not do away with the real. Rather, it insists that the future, like the past, is a reality that has always already been remediated.

Like remediation, premediation also operates according to a double logic. In addition to the predictive or proleptic sense of premediation in which the future is remediated before it even happens, there is also an ontological aspect of premediation in which the future is remediated at the very moment that it emerges into the present, because the world is already so thoroughly hypermediated that it becomes impossible for anything to happen outside of its premediation. In this sense premediation manifests the desire that the world of the future be always premediated by colonizing the future with media—mobile phones, PDAs, laptops, personal computers, digital cameras, video-phones, MP-3 players, and so forth. Insofar as the future is full of such media technologies, it will be full of remediations of prior media. Premediation is

thus connected with the idea of the ubiquity of media and the sense that the world (and its future) has somehow changed. In this very real way, then, the war against terror or the war against Iraq is a war about the future—not only about how the future will be and is being premediated but about which and whose premediations will predominate or persist. Thus, quite unlike the Gulf War of 1991, when media coverage was tightly controlled and filtered through the American military, the premediation of the later war against Iraq provided for embedded media access that the *New York Times* characterized as unprecedented “since World War II and on a scale never before seen in the American military.”¹⁶ This “media mobilization,” which required “vast logistical planning of its own, involve[d] at least 500 reporters, photographers and television crew members—about 100 of them from foreign and international news organizations, including the Arab network Al Jazeera.”

The unprecedented access offered by embedded media provided a marked contrast to what Margot Norris has described as the “unprecedented Pentagon censorship of the press during the Persian Gulf War.”¹⁷ Appropriating Walter Cronkite’s term “precensorship,” Norris argues that this regime of precensorship transformed the reality of the Gulf War into the Baudrillardian “hyperreal” by concealing the war’s dead bodies from the public eye: “Precensorship allows the Pentagon to determine in advance what will be seen and not seen, known and not known, shown and not shown, of the war. The effect is that the military is able to program history in advance of preediting its possible narratives.”¹⁸ Norris’s Baudrillardian account of precensorship in the Gulf War may appear similar to the concept of premediation that I have been sketching out. Yet there are some crucial differences between what I have been trying to understand as premediation and what Norris characterizes as precensorship—not only in terms of the Baudrillardian epistemology of precensorship, its sense of the triumph of simulation over the real, but also in terms of the incommensurability between the media practices of the two wars. Norris invokes Baudrillard in service of an epistemic model that posits a sense of knowledge, truth, or facts independent of mediation, claiming that in the Gulf War these facts were censored by the Pentagon so that the media and the public would only get an incomplete, partial account of what Norris calls the “secret reality and dreadful truth” that lay behind the “media extravaganza” which the military enabled with its briefings and rocket’s-eye videos. Unlike precensorship, premediation operates according to the assumption that knowledge, truth, or facts are never independent of mediation but are constructed and stabilized through the mediation of political, cultural, and technological networks.

Where Norris sees Pentagon precensorship in the Gulf War as getting rid of the unprogrammable or unpredictability of war in its radical limitation of media coverage, I would argue that the premediation of the war in Iraq worked

in precisely the opposite fashion to proliferate mediation. In the case of what the Bush administration likes to call “Operation Iraqi Freedom,” we know that the military was not precensoring the media in the same way it did during the Gulf War; instead, it embedded media in the military in the hope that media would see the war as the military did. Of course, embedded media did not experience the war directly or without mediation but rather as mediated according to the principles and protocols of the military or of the soldiers themselves. While the notion of precensorship may work as the media logic of the Gulf War, it cannot account for how the proliferation of premediations of the war in Iraq brought about the sense of that war’s inevitability. To focus on the Bush administration’s deception or misinformation in making its case for preemptive war against Iraq is to miss what is most distinctive about the medial logic in the later war in Iraq. Premediation works to predetermine the form of the real only insofar as it tries to premeditate as many of the possible worlds, or possible paths, as the war might take. In the case of Iraq, as in other instances of televisual premediation, these possible outcomes or paths were premediated on national and international cable news networks as programs that were in many of their formal features nearly indistinguishable from those that would be presented after the war had begun.

Premediation and the Ontology of Film

Where premediation of the war on cable news networks presented the impending war to the American and global public as if it were already news, the plan to embed media in the military led the *New York Times* to think of the impending war as a forthcoming feature film, claiming that embedded media “offer[ed] the American public and the world at large a front row seat” to the war against Iraq.¹⁹ While the *Times* framed its coverage of embedded media largely in terms of journalistic access, what seems more telling is the way this new media practice—a distributed network of civilian and military, national and global, human and social, technological and medial actants—participated in the logic of premediation, working to ensure that any future war in Iraq would always already be remediated as something like a film.

The *Times* offered another particularly cinematic expression of how the events of 9/11 brought about the desire that the future be remediated as something like a film in a front-page article from Sunday, August 18, 2002, which reported that the “rebirth” or rebuilding of Ground Zero, the site of the World Trade Center, would be filmed by 35 mm cameras placed at the site and each set to take a picture every five minutes.²⁰ The result, when the film is run at the conventional cinematic projection rate of twenty-four frames per second, will be a time-lapse film of the changes on the site as it is being rebuilt. According to the project’s director and co-producer, Jim Whitaker, this “filming” is

scheduled to last at least seven years; plans for the film's post-production are still under way. The resulting films, says co-producer David Solomon, might be edited into a short feature for public screening, or presented as raw footage to the Library of Congress, or exhibited in raw or edited form in museums. However the films are finally shown, or even if they are not shown at all, the whole project strikingly exemplifies the current cultural logic of premediation.

During the 1990s, at the end of the century and the millennium, Western culture found itself at a moment in which media were largely oriented toward the present and the past, seeking both to erase the signs of their presence in the transparent remediation of history and to foreground their mediation of the present by relentlessly remediating earlier media forms. At the current historical moment, however, American (and increasingly global) culture finds itself amidst a different media environment, in which media have become increasingly concerned with making sure that the future is also premediated. In this concern with premediation, remediation does not disappear: the past, as well as the future, is understood as that which has always already been remediated. One feature of this simultaneous concern with the remediation of both past and future has been a proliferation of scholarly and popular historical projects—in a variety of media and in a variety of national and transnational contexts—to uncover and explain the world's mediated past. Among these projects are the history of early cinema and other optical technologies; the prehistory of computers; the early days of radio, television, and telegraph; the material history of print culture; and the archiving and interpretation of dead media in all their forms. This collective project to rewrite the past is also motivated by, or participates in, the practice of premediating the future by enforcing the idea that the past, too, had always been premediated, that historical and cultural difference (past or future) is constituted at least in part according to the emergence or development of different media technologies and practices.

The project to document the rebirth of the World Trade Center site participates in the desire of premediation to extend our networks of media technologies into the future, so that the future will already be remediated when it emerges into the present. This project also serves to remind us that the desire to mediate the future at the moment it emerges into the present has its historical antecedents. Andy Warhol's 1964 *Empire*, an eight-hour film of the Empire State Building, is one obvious project that the current documentation of Ground Zero is meant to remediate. But even more broadly, this project remediates some of the earliest moments of American and European cinema, which often grounded its documentary and archival impulses in the photographic ontology of film. One need only remember the Lumiere brothers' trick film on the demolition of a wall, which, played backward, reveals the wall miraculously rebuilding itself. From actuality films to early forms of narrative, the

photographic ontology of cinema played an important role in the emergence of this new medium.

An interesting example of narrative plot devices built on the evidentiary role of cinema's photographic ontology can be found in *Evidence of the Film*, a 1913 Thanhouser production that employs the already conventional trope of film as evidence used in denouement of its plot. The trope employed in *Evidence of the Film* is that film is able to capture and then screen to a viewer an action that had not been seen by a live observer but which serves to catch out a criminal, or (in a favorite early plot device) an adulterer. In fact, this film plays on the difference between eyewitness evidence and the evidence of the film, arguing for the way in which the evidence of the film is more certain, more reliable, than the evidence of the human eye. The crime concerns an unscrupulous stockbroker who very ostentatiously and publicly allows his co-workers to witness him putting his client's stock certificates into an envelope, sealing it with wax to ensure that it is secure and has not been tampered with, and handing it over to a delivery boy to take to his client. After he secretly swaps this with a duplicate envelope, he is caught out by the evidence of the film, captured quite accidentally by a film crew involved in shooting another film at the very place and at the very time that the stockbroker knocks down the delivery boy and makes the switch. The point of this plot device (a favorite among early filmmakers) is that the ontology of the film, its photographic and indexical relation to the real, is indisputable—the agency of the cinematic witness trumps the agency of the human.

Spielberg plays upon this photographic ontology near the end of *Minority Report*, where Detective Anderton sees a photograph of his dead son on the bed of his supposed killer (amidst dozens of similar photographs). In particular he spots a photo strip picturing his son with this man and presumes from this photographic evidence that the man is his son's murderer. Of course, the point here is that the evidence of the photograph (what Danny Whitwer calls the "orgy of evidence" on the bed) proves to be mistaken—the photo strip has been faked. This falsification of photographic evidence ultimately leads to the realization (for Anderton and for the film's audience) that the precog system of crime prevention can also be faked or fooled and that a murder can be mistaken for something else (in the case of the film, mistaken for an "echo" of the previous murder). But in exposing the way in which photography (and precognition) can be faked, Spielberg remediates another element of the narrative device used in *Evidence of the Film*, the fact that it is not only the photographic ontology of the film that constitutes evidence of a crime but also its public display, its integration into the socio-technical practices of juridical evidence. In the scene where Anderton is tricked into believing that Leo Crow is his son's murderer, the photographs themselves are displayed on Crow's bed. It is not

only the existence of the photographs but their mode of display (and their availability to juridical practice) that constitutes the fabricated evidence.

Even more telling is the manner in which the film's true denouement is orchestrated, the way in which Lamar Burgess, director of Pre-Crime and Anderton's mentor, is publicly convicted, or rather the way in which his guilt is publicly revealed, by the screening and exhibition of the precogs' premediated witnessing of the murder. For in *Minority Report*, as in *Evidence of the Film*, the ontology of the moving image alone is not sufficient to serve as evidence; the image must be projected and screened and exhibited, made available for use as evidence within the prevailing juridical system. That is, if the film had stayed in the can in *Evidence of the Film*, if it had not been found in the editing room by the older sister of the wrongly accused delivery boy, the stockbroker's crime would not have been revealed; similarly, if the precognition of Burgess's murder of Ann Lively had remained inside of Agatha, the daughter of Ann Lively and the precog who witnessed her mother's murder, the murder might never have been revealed. Both films make the photographic agency of the film dependent upon its public display and screening before the appropriate juridical witnesses (indeed, this witnessing of the premediated crime is built into the pre-crime system as well in that there need to be two witnesses to the precognition in order for the Pre-Crime unit to be allowed to arrest and convict the pre-criminal). In both of these cases, then, public display or projection is seen to be central to what distinguishes film as a medium.²¹

In *Strange Days*, on the other hand, as we have already seen, the wire is a technology marked precisely by its elimination of screening, exhibition, and display. In imagining a more private form of mediation and display, one tied more to 1990s dreams of virtual reality than to contemporary dreams of ubiquitous media, *Strange Days* marks its difference from a film like *Minority Report*, the difference between the new media imaginary of 1995 and that of 2002. Whereas in 1995 virtual reality was still seen as marking the ultimate potential of digital immediacy, by 2002 digital mediation had become inextricably part of the public space in which we work, play, and live. The current cultural moment is marked by the hypermediacy of premediation, in which not just the past and present but also the future has already been remediated.

But insofar as *Minority Report* marks a logic of premediation that in some sense supplants the double logic of remediation epitomized by *Strange Days*, Spielberg also self-consciously embraces the cinematic roots of premediation, its connection with the public or communal screening practices of film rather than the more private viewing practices involved in virtual reality. Indeed, where Bigelow has Lenny Nero insist in *Strange Days* that the wire is "not TV only better," Spielberg would tie the premediation of the precognitives to some of the earliest moments of cinema. Not only does *Minority Report* invoke the idea of the photographic ontology of cinema and the importance of public

exhibition or display as being crucial to what constitutes “the evidence of the film,” but in the way in which Whitwer discovers the minority report that leads to uncovering the murder committed by Burgess, Spielberg provides another, even more intriguing, reference to early cinema. What tips Whitwer off to the fact that there has been some manipulation of the evidence of the precogs is that in looking at what appear to be two different clips of the same premediated murder, he notices that the ripples on the water are moving in opposite directions; thus he concludes that the films must have been shot (or rather the precognitions perceived) at different moments. This realization is interesting in several ways. It alludes to the opening scene of the movie in which Anderton is looking at the precognition of an about-to-be-murdered adulterer waiting in the park outside the townhouse of his lover. In looking at the precognition of this murder, Anderton sees a boy in the background first on one side of the man then on another; he correctly concludes from this that the boy must be on a merry-go-round, a deduction that helps to locate the townhouse and thus to prevent the crime. In this scene as well, where Anderton is interacting with the precognition displayed on the screen at Pre-Crime headquarters, he is shown turning a knob back and forth between two still images of the potential victim in the park with the boy behind him on different sides. The narrative point of this sequence is for Anderton to locate the townhouse by identifying the park through the presence of its merry-go-round; but the cinematic point that Spielberg means to make involves a self-conscious reference to early precinematic optical devices like the zootrope, which took still images and moved them in a circle to create motion. This attention to the details of the film, whether the direction of the ripples on the water or the placement of a bystander in the background of a film, is not unlike the attention paid by viewers of very early cinema, in which filmgoers watched films not to be absorbed by a transparent, seamless narrative but to be astonished by the images captured on film. More specifically, among the images that early viewers commented on with some regularity in early cinema were the wind blowing through the leaves of trees and the rhythmic motion of the waves of the sea. At this most crucial moment in the solving of the crime, Spielberg conflates these two paradigmatic moments of early cinema in the example of the ripples on the water, which were produced by a shift in the wind.

In calling attention to Spielberg’s insistence on the precinematic origins of his own film and of the system of premediation epitomized by the Pre-Crime unit, I mean to emphasize the continuities as well as the discontinuities between the juridico-medial regime of early cinematic modernity and the regime of premediation enacted by *Minority Report*. The accidental filming of the stockbroker’s crime in *Evidence of the Film* (and the arguably greater accident of the messenger boy’s sister discovering the film in her job working in a film-developing shop) speaks to another ontological aspect of the photographic

medium of film, the way in which accident is built into the intentionality of photography, the way in which photographic film (moving or not) captures whatever the lens exposes it to, independent of the photographer's (or cinematographer's) intention. Indeed, it is precisely the inescapability of photographic accident that creates the narrative drama of *Evidence of the Film* and provides the startling implication that in a newly cinematic world, crimes and other human and nonhuman actions might be recorded that would have previously escaped notice.²² In the world of *Minority Report*, on the other hand, the ubiquitous premediation of the precogs is meant to rule out the very accidental possibility that murder might go unnoticed, that a murderer might succeed in escaping legal discipline (which is precisely what Lamar Burgess tries but fails to do, as the accidental occurrence of the minority report proves his juridico-medial creation both fallible and infallible at the same time). But to mark this difference between the cinematic modernity of *Evidence of the Film* and the postmodern premediation of *Minority Report* is not to insist on a fundamental break between these two juridico-medial regimes. On the contrary, the proliferation of cinematic narratives like *Evidence of the Film* testifies to the way in which the new medium of cinema worked to prompt both fantasies and fears of the kind of seemingly universal surveillance made possible by networked telecommunication media at the start of the twenty-first century, or by the cyborgian precognitive network depicted in the world of *Minority Report*.²³

Thus, *Minority Report* remediates the tradition of early cinema at the same time that it helps to clarify the threefold character of premediation at work at the beginning of the third millennium. Where remediation entailed the refashioning of prior media forms and technologies, premediation entails the desire to remediate future media forms and technologies, like the wire in *Strange Days*, or pre-crime and precognition in *Minority Report*. In addition, premediation entails the desire to remediate the future before it happens, the desire that catastrophic events like those of 9/11 never catch us unawares, the desire to avoid the catastrophic immediacy of watching live on TV a plane crash into the World Trade Center, or the Twin Towers burning and collapsing—or in *Minority Report* the desire to rid society of murder. Finally, this desire to premeditate the future before it happens is accompanied by the desire to colonize the future by extending our networks of media technologies not only spatially across the globe and beyond, but also temporally into the future; in this sense, premediation seeks to make sure that the future is so fully mediated by new media forms that it is unable to emerge into the present without having already been remediated in the past. Like the Pre-Crime unit of *Minority Report*, premediation seeks to prevent the future by premediating it—to make sure, in some sense, that the future never happens. On the other hand, like the project to premeditate the rebuilding and “rebirth” of (or from) Ground Zero, premediation seeks to make sure that the future has already happened by capturing

the moment when the future emerges into the present, that is, the moment when the future has already become the past, by extending our media networks into the future. While premediation differs from remediation in that the latter seems to focus largely on prior media forms where the former focuses chiefly on future media events, this difference in emphasis helps to underscore an important point of continuity between the two media logics, the way in which form and event are inseparable under any media regime. Much as any act of remediation involves both a prior and a current media event, so any act of premediation involves the remediation of a current or future media form. Not unlike the double logic of remediation, which sought simultaneously to erase mediation and to proliferate it in the practice of reforming or refashioning prior media forms, the logic of premediation seeks to prevent the future by proliferating its remediation by current media forms. In so doing, premediation simultaneously insists on imagining the future in terms of new media practices and technologies and on extending the media networks of the present so that they seem to reach indefinitely into a securely (if indeterminately) colonized future.

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Notes

1. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999).
2. Paul Virilio, *Open Sky*, trans. Julie Rose (London: Verso, 1997), 28.
3. *Ibid.*, 37.
4. Tom Gunning argues as much in the conclusion to his essay "Re-Newing Old Technologies: Astonishment, Second Nature, and the Uncanny in Technology from the Previous Turn-of-the Century," in *Rethinking Media Change: The Aesthetics of Transition*, ed. David Thornburn and Henry Jenkins (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 39–60. Commenting on "the prophetic nature of new technologies, their address to a previously unimagined future," Gunning avers: "Every new technology has a utopian dimension that imagines a future radically transformed by the implications of the device or practice" (56).
5. BBC broadcast a special suggesting that the perpetrator was known and that he had been part of a U.S. government plan to develop weaponized anthrax.
6. The idea of "l'a'venir," a future that can never be known, is featured at the beginning of the recent (2002) documentary *Derrida*, but it also recurs throughout Derrida's work, as in the following passage from *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of

- Chicago Press, 1996), 47. I am grateful to Kenneth Jackson for alerting me to this passage.
7. Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real!* (London: Verso, 2002); Jean Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism* (London: Verso, 2002).
 8. Geoff King, "Just Like a Movie? 9/11 and Hollywood Spectacle," unpublished essay.
 9. Angela Ndaliansis, "Special Effects, Morphing Magic, and the 1990s Cinema of Attractions," in *Meta-Morphing: Visual Transformation and the Culture of Quick-Change*, ed. Vivian Sobchack (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 251–71.
 10. Mary Ann Doane, "Information, Crisis, Catastrophe," in *Logics of Television: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, ed. Patricia Mellencamp (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 228.
 11. *Ibid.*, 238.
 12. Doane supports her account of the logic of televisual catastrophe with reference to Freud's account (in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) of the psychic need to maintain low levels of anxiety witnessed in soldiers who had been traumatized by the war, or to Benjamin's account of a similar phenomenon in terms of the shocks of modernity. Clearly the current expression of premediation in televisual news media and film bears some affinities to the traumas of modernity, particularly to the preoccupation with predicting and controlling the future attendant upon the increased risks and consequences of industrial accidents in modernity. Developments like insurance, political polls, or economic forecasts, for example, are in some sense early efforts to premeditate the future. Yet they differ from the current logic of premediation in their desire to control the future rather than to proliferate competing mediations of it.
 13. The idea of a technology of premediation that would in fact see into the future is a central part of the premise of John Woo's *Paycheck* (2004), an adaptation of yet another Philip K. Dick story.
 14. The competition among cable news networks in the run-up to war was featured in a *New York Times* article that detailed the war's premediation without using the term: "Recalling how CNN made its name during the gulf war, each channel is trying to distinguish itself and outdo its rivals. And because cable news success often seems to rest as much on the presentation of the programs as the journalism itself, executives are looking for different production twists to enhance their war, and prewar, coverage. As a result, the reports are taking on a hypercharged tone as the cable networks try to persuade viewers ahead of time that they are the ones to watch should war break out. But even as these news executives conceded that competition had electrified their presentations, they took pains to emphasize that they were covering the story with appropriate gravity, not to mention significant resources." "War or No, News on Cable Already Provides the Drama," *New York Times*, January 15, 2003.
 15. For interesting and important discussions of the politics of information networks, see Richard Rogers, ed., *Preferred Placement* (Amsterdam: Jan van Eyck Akademie, 2000), particularly the essays by Rogers, Noortje Marres, and Greg Elmer.

16. "Journalists Are Assigned to Accompany U.S. Troops," *New York Times*, February 18, 2003.
17. Margot Norris, "Only the Guns Have Eyes: Military Censorship and the Body Count," in *Seeing through the Media: The Persian Gulf War*, ed. Susan Jeffords and Lauren Rabinowitz (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994).
18. *Ibid.*, 286.
19. "Journalists Are Assigned."
20. "Cameras to Record Ground Zero, A Frame at a Time," *New York Times*, August 18, 2002.
21. Gerald Mast is not alone in arguing precisely that it is the aesthetic experience of the projected film that is the distinguishing mark of the cinematic medium. *Film/Cinema/Movie: A Theory of Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977; rpt. 1984).
22. There is another, related sense in which accident is significant in modernity, the way in which, as Wolfgang Schivelbusch has discussed, new technologies like the railroad introduce new anxieties about new forms of accident. *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). In this sense, *Evidence of the Film* represents new anxieties about the increased surveillance made possible by the invention and widespread proliferation of cinema.
23. An interesting treatment of the relationships among accident, crime, and the global surveillance made possible by satellite telecommunication networks is Wim Wenders's underrated 1997 film *The End of Violence*.