Intervening in the Language of Security: Emotion, Appraisal,
and Securitization Theory

by

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For Laura

Abstract

How can one intervene in the language of security? If using the language of security involves wrapping issues in tropes about threat, danger, and the need to act immediately, then how do we, as scholars, policy makers, and even activists, disrupt this kind of linguistic logic? While the Copenhagen School and its affiliates provide both the analytical framework and the normative impetus to understand this question, attempts to develop an ethical-political practice of desecuritization thus far are flawed due to an implicit commitment to seeing security speech acts as open to rational deliberation and contestation. Such a view obscures the role of emotion, especially fear, in shaping an audience's reaction to claims of an existential threat. In response, I suggest a theory of securitization based on cognitive appraisal theory which argues that audience appraisal and the resultant emotions they produce make or break the success of a security speech act, and that this should be the focus of any attempt at intervention.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

How can we intervene in discussions of security? Using the language of security involves wrapping issues in tropes about threat, danger, and most importantly, the need to act immediately because ‘if we don’t act today then we won’t be able to do so tomorrow’. The overwhelming need to act in the face of security issues can be used for both subverting attempts at open and public debate, as well as justifying exceptional measures (i.e. preventative war) which exist outside of normal day-to-day legal frameworks. Some security analysts and policy makers have hoped to use the language of security to mobilize political power to resolve seemingly intractable problems. Such was the case with emergence of ‘environmental security’ (Deudney, 1991; Dalby, 2009; Floyd, 2007). However, this strategy frequently backfires as advocates fail to comprehend the full implications of the language of security. The frame of environmental security, something that ostensibly requires broad-based cooperation, leads to viewing the problem of biosphere degradation from the perspective of an antagonistic ‘us vs. them’ mindset (Deudney, 1991). As the language of security depends on the enunciation of clear and distinguishable threats, it is often trapped in its own grammatical structure by the need to establish a clearly defined and identifiable enemy. Even for political projects which work to harness the mobilizing potential of security language for benign purposes, whether it be for the environment, humanitarian aid, or some vision of political emancipation (Booth, 1991), the result can be the reproduction of the logic of security in harmful ways. In the most extreme cases the language of security can be seen as a discursive runaway train, resistant any outside force that might slow it down or change its direction. How then can we stop it in its tracks?

This project is focused on examining the possibility of intervening in social situations where the language of security has become dominant.¹ These are situations in which issues of politics are discursively framed in terms of imminent danger and even existential threat. The point of departure for this investigation is the increasingly popular securitization framework where issues are ‘securitized’ by means of a security speech act occurring between agents and audiences. In this view, intervening in the language of security depends on one’s ability to influence the social and linguistic conditions of the security speech act. If, for example, the act is depends on the securitizing agent invoking the grammar of security to discuss immigration, the desecuritizing agent must offer an alternative grammar to frame the subject (Huysman, 1995; Aradau, 2004a). Here immigration is to be transformed from being discursively framed as an imminent danger to the body politic, to something understood in much broader terms, such as an economic or demographic necessity, or even a humanitarian obligation.

While in broad agreement with this approach, I suggest its understanding of the security speech act obscures the role of affect; the necessary conveyance of emotion that is required for an audience to see an issue as threatening. This analytical gap is most demonstrable in the normative approaches to securitization which argue for interventions in security speech acts, but do so in a manner which presupposes a rational and deliberative exchange, and by extension the absence of affect.² Correspondingly, I suggest a new approach to the security speech act informed by cognitive psychology, what I call appraisal securitization theory. Appraisal theory allows us to understand how the emotional disposition of the audience is shaped by the claims of the securitizing agent, and how these claims can elicit feelings of fear. Long at the core of

¹ The kind of security we are talking about here is often international in character, but the analytical distinction between domestic and international security has increasingly becoming untenable as the discussion below will show.

² I use the terms ‘affect’ and ‘emotion’ interchangeably. I treat the word ‘feeling’ as broader sensory perception, which can include emotion, but can also include other perceptive experiences (i.e. tactile).

theories of security, a public's fears work to motivate an audience to see security measures as legitimate. This approach shifts the analysis of securitization away from the more problematic concept of existential threat and refocuses the analysis on the more complex and dynamic concept of fear. I conclude by arguing that normative approaches which call for interventions into the practice of securitization can only be successful if they recognize the role of affect and configure their strategies to focus on challenging the emotional dynamics of securitization, rather than relying solely on its rational contestation.

The goal of the present chapter is threefold. First, the bulk of the chapter is dedicated to problem specification: why does the way people use the language of security even matter? What does it mean to intervene in a security discourse? What idea of security are we invoking when we talk about the 'language' of security? These questions can be answered with a brief review of the development of security studies. I contend that interest in the interventions in the language of security can be seen as the natural outgrowth of the expansion of security concepts at the end of the Cold War. The emergence of new security concepts, and a growing consciousness of the harms associated with them, makes understanding how to suppress or prevent their emergence a research priority. The remainder of the chapter is dedicated to providing a brief thematic overview of major arguments, as well laying out the general chapter structure for the remainder of the project.

Security! What do you mean?³

A brief review of the history of security studies is the best way to situate the present inquiry. The study of international security in the 1990s was marked an intense period of self-reflection. The Cold War, which had been central frame for understanding world politics for decades, was over, and matters of security could no longer be framed largely in terms of East-West power

³ The title of this section is borrowed from Jef Huysmans discussion of the same subject (1998a)

relations. If the central subject of security studies, the analysis of potential East-West military conflict, had evaporated, what then would the field examine? Would the general theme of interstate conflict continue to dominate the research agenda in the midst of new world order?

For some, the answer to this question was not only a resounding ‘yes’, but that any notion of shifting security studies away from the theme of interstate conflict was problematic. In 1991, Stephen Walt attempted to outline the prospects for security studies in the post-Cold War era. He strongly emphasized the need for security studies to remain focused on the “phenomenon of war” and not to widen the concept so as to “destroy its intellectual coherence” by considering other kinds of threats such as “poverty, AIDs, environmental hazards, drug abuse, and the like” (1991:212-213). This approach was predicated upon using the “canons of scientific research: careful and consistent use of terms, unbiased measure of critical concepts, and public documentation of theoretical and empirical claims”, but most importantly remaining “wary of the counterproductive tangents that have seduced other areas of international studies, most notably the ‘post-modern’ approach to international affairs” (Walt, 1991:222-23). Walt’s position then became characterized by a specific object of study, interstate conflict, which was approached with a specific methodology, social science positivism. This came to be known as the traditionalist or conventional approach to security studies, a view commonly equated with the neorealist paradigm (Buzan, 1997:5).

For others, this narrow agenda for securities studies was problematic. Walt’s article became a common touchstone for a variety of critiques over both methodology and subject focus. Some questioned the supposedly scientific basis of neorealism’s view of security studies (Williams and Krause, 1996). Others argued for methodological pluralism, hoping to leverage new research techniques from the recent post-structuralist turn in IR (Hansen, 1997). Especially

important were the so-called ‘wideners’, those who objected to security studies being constrained to examining only military threats, when an array of other issues like economic collapse and environmental degradation threatened the state system (Buzan, 1997). As Adam Baldwin noted: “redefining ‘security’ had recently becoming something of a cottage industry” (1997:5).

This debate was never resolved within the academic journals and conferences of the discipline, but rather by recent trends in world politics. The 1990s were witness to the emergence and increasing popularity of a variety of new security issues. The phrase ‘new issues’ here is somewhat of a misnomer, as things like environmental degradation, energy resources, and global health are all issues that have been around for some time. Rather, it was the framing of these issues *as* ‘security’ issues which was novel. No longer were discussions of security framed solely in terms of ‘national security’, the paradigm focused on interstate conflict, but in a variety of new ‘securities’ which had entered into common political lexicon. One helpful way to visualize this transition is to look at the relative frequency of new security issues in the chart below.

Figure 1 – Emergence of New Security Concepts⁴

⁴ Produced with Google Ngram Viewer using Google Book’s ‘English Corpus’ as a baseline and smoothing of 3

Using Google Books' English corpus as a baseline, we can show the percentage of books produced in a year that contain any given term. As the popularity of an idea increases, it will continue to take up a larger portion of the corpus. A few things should be said to put this graph in context. First, the relative use of these concepts is nowhere near that of 'national security', still by far the dominant understanding of security. If it was included in this chart it would dwarf all other concepts. Second, not all security concepts have uniformly increased in use; discussion of 'human security' has increased relatively rapidly when compared to 'border security', and 'environmental security' has stagnated. Regardless, this graph still illustrates the considerable change and variation in discussions of security that have emerged in the last two decades. How the word 'security' is being used is visibly changing, but the question is why? What allows something to become discussed as a matter of security?

In a major departure of viewing security solely in terms of conflict between states, the Copenhagen School (Buzan et al: 1998) has argued that security is a social and linguistic construct. Rejecting any notion of an objective standard of security, such as the balance of power, this approach argued that the meaning of security needs to be understood as intersubjectively shaped by common use of language.

At the core of this approach is the concept of the speech act, the practice of doing something through language. The Copenhagen School argues that issues are 'securitized' when an agent, typically a political elite, speaks about an existential threat to an audience. An existential threat to an audience is simply something that is perceived as a danger to their survival, such nuclear war, military invasion, environmental degradation, etc. The agent attempts to persuade the audience that it is threatened, at the most fundamental level, and this in turn requires new special measures to ensure the audience's survival - what we would commonly

call security measures. The process of making something a security issue, what is called ‘securitization’, is achieved by bringing the logic of existential threat to bear on a specific subject.⁵

Securitization theory, as this approach has come to be called, is not merely an explanatory framework. It is also a normative framework. It allows us to envision the ethical implications of making something a security issue; the values and harms associated with securitization, and how we ought to manage them. Two special features of securitization theory allow us to reflect on this. First, by viewing security as contingent on social practice – the security speech act – we move away from the more common understandings of security as an unproblematic public good, or even commodity, to be maximized (Neocelous, 2007). This may be more common (who doesn’t want more security?), but it obscures our ability to envision the ethical implications of security as a form of practice. Second, if security is seen as a practice it brings to foreground considerations of agency – who or what is responsible for the security speech act? If the decision to securitize something means making a choice, a political choice, then like other political choices surrounding issues of things justice, freedom, equality, etc., it becomes a matter of debate open to moral justification.

For those who might see security as the *raison d’être* of International Relations this position may sound problematic. It is true that some disciplinary paradigms share the popular perception that the more security one has the better, and that this leads to states maximizing power, and it turn security (Mearsheimer, 2001). Even outside of academia, popular culture and media may have valorized the notion of security to the extent where it becomes difficult to

⁵ One point about this approach which deserves additional emphasis is the radical constructivism inherent in this project. For the Copenhagen School concepts like danger, threat, and most importantly, security, are all socially constructed without exception. There is no ‘objective’ security. To borrow from Wendt (1992), security is what we make of it.

envision it as something undesirable. How then can we see the ‘label’ security as involved in harms which warrant some sort of critical reflection?

The answer to this question can be illustrated with the simple example of airport security. People may unproblematically agree that air plane passengers should be subjected to some form of scrutiny before boarding a plane. However, a few distinct problems emerge in this context. The first is the origin of those security measures: are they the product of some technocratic management of risk or were they the product of an open and accountable public body? While public accountability can be taken as the universal hallmark of legitimacy in democratic liberal societies, arguments about the technical nature of a security issue, such as the risk management of air travel, can effectively narrow one’s ability to contest security measures. What role do elected representatives have, in discussing the employment of fully body image scanners at airports, when this is framed as a purely technical issue? Second, what about situations where airport security measures derogate the legal and institutional frameworks of a society? Do airport security measures such as enhanced pat downs violate longstanding legal frameworks protecting privacy, such as the Fourth Amendment in the United States? Claims about the absolute necessity of certain security measures to ensure public safety can be employed to subvert long standing restrictions on state powers. Finally, there is the possibility that security issues may be framed in such a way that specific groups, i.e. ethnic, racial, or national minorities, become the source of insecurity that such measures are intended to address. Minority groups may then be exposed to an unfair burden and be subjected to additional scrutiny which can be seen as a harm in itself (Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2010). All of these harms may emerge even before the effectiveness of a particular airport security measure is reflected upon.

Viewing the securitization of issues as a practice then allows us to conceive of a particular set of social harms which can emerge from the language of security. This practice-oriented view of security is distinctly different from public good view of security. Still, defenders of a public good perspective may argue that these harms are offset by the public safety benefits of a particular security measure. In this view airport security measures like full body image scanning may be closed from public contestation, involve derogation of certain rights and the expansion of state powers, and involve the reification of particular groups into threats, but these are worthwhile harms in the broader context of promoting the physical safety of airline passengers. This is the justificatory power of the language of security which treats security as a public value to be balanced with other values (Wolfers, 1962; Baldwin, 1997; Huysmans, 1998c; Neocleous, 2007). It is problematic for two reasons. First, this makes the assumption that a given security measure is actually effective in any measurable sense, which the case of full body image scanners shows is not self-evident (United States Government Accountability Office, 2010). Second, and more importantly, the public good view neglects the fact that the goals of physical safety can be achieved without invoking the language, and by extension, the logic of security. This is to say that the particular measures involved in passenger scrutiny can be open to public contestation, respect existing legal and institutional frameworks, and protect minority groups from undue burden, all the while attempting to maximize the physical safety of airline passengers. Security isn't a value in-and-of-itself, but a means to achieve certain political goals which can be reached in other ways. The objective of physically safe air travel does not have to be at odds with a democratic and open society – but it certainly can be when it is framed within the insular logic of security.

Viewed in this light, we are able to see the practice of securitization in a much more cautious and pessimistic manner, one where bringing the logic of security to bear on issues actually becomes a threat in and of itself.⁶ When we realize that both the language of security can be harmful, and that this language is consciously (and even intentionally) deployed by agents, we are forced to reflect on the ethical implications of speaking security. When is securitizing an issue morally justified?

The literature on this questioned is mixed. Some positions advocate what can be taken as a categorical stance against the practice of securitization (Aradau, 2004a; Huysmans, 2002), while others argue that under a very narrow set of circumstances the logic of security can be useful and morally justified tool in mobilizing political power (Williams, 2003; Floyd, 2007). Curiously, identifying the particular circumstances of when securitization is normatively desirable has not been the main thrust of this literature.⁷ In answering the question ‘when is securitizing an issue morally justified?’ the common threads appears to be ‘not very often, if ever’. If viewing security as a public good to be maximized makes it difficult to be seen as harmful, then viewing it as a practice makes it difficult to be seen as anything *other* than harmful. If the inherent function of the language of security is the mobilization of political power at the expense of open and public contestation and increased governmental powers, not to mention its reification of minorities into ‘threats’, how can we envision ‘good’ instances of securitization?

⁶ This enduring pessimism is one point where the securitization perspective sharply differs from other approaches in critical security studies. One does not do away with the harms of security by changing the referent to something more palatable (i.e. the human body or environment), the underlying social logic still exists. See Chapter Three and the discussion of Aradau on this issue.

⁷ Floyd’s typology of normatively desirable and undesirable instances of securitization may be an exception to this categorization.

This is an eminently difficult task. One might argue that linking the mobilizing potential of security to some view of humanitarian emancipation as envisioned by the Welsh School of security studies suggests a normatively desirable form of securitization (Floyd, 2007a:330). A similar case can be made with the concept of ‘human security’ where the mobilizing power of security language is used to protect individuals from a variety of threats, as well as the example of environmental security discussed at the beginning of this chapter. These positions are well intentioned, but fail to comprehend the pervasive character of the harms of securitization. In critiquing the recent move to securitize human trafficking within the United Kingdom, Claudia Aradau has pointed out that such move was predicated upon establishing a new dangerous ‘other’, a group from which the threat of trafficking emerges from: illegal immigrants and prostitutes (2004a:399). Any attempt to change the referential focus of security demands that we create new dangerous ‘others’ to replace the previous category, a move that paradoxically creates a new field of insecurity. Positions like the Welsh School and human security analysts may wish to harness the mobilizing power of security, but they fail to realize such a move risks reproducing its harmful effects.

The investigation of when securitizing an issue is morally justified has been stunted by the profound difficulty of separating the mobilizing potential of security from its deleterious effects. When can we have the former, but without the latter? Is this even possible? Or, if one prefers the consequentialist formulation: when does the former outweigh the latter? The difficulty in answering this question may in part be the reason why there is such an uneasy consensus that by and large the practice of securitization is to be avoided. However, even the difficulty of answering this question is overshadowed by the perception that the securitization of issues in world politics is growing (Aradau, 2004a:406), a proposition supported by graph above.

It's the combination of an overarching concern with the practice of securitization, along with the concern that it is occurring at a visibly increasing pace, which make the imperative research question of this project 'how do we intervene in the language of security?'

Securitization, Ethics , and Affect

Investigating the possibility of intervention in a security speech act becomes justified when we recognize such acts can fundamentally change the trajectory of world politics. It would not have even been possible to conceive of Iraq as a security 'issue' in 2003 warranting military invasion without the language of security framing it as kind of existential threat requiring exceptional measures. Securitization theory provides a strong starting point for understanding this problem, especially its normative variants which emphasize the harms of securitization and work to develop the practical strategies for intervention.

The wager of this project however, is that securitization theory is missing one crucial element in its analysis of the security speech act: affect. It is this analytical gap present in descriptive variants of securitization theory which in turn skews the prescriptive focus of normative securitization theory. By not recognizing the role of affect in the security speech act, normative approaches to securitization make the mistake of presupposing the exchange between the securitizing agent and the audience is a rational/deliberative exchange, and therefore subject to rational critique. The politics of security are felt just as much as they are reasoned, and any attempt to change the direction of a security discourse must take into account this distinction. This holds true whether an agent is attempting to resist a securitizing move within a state (i.e. the securitization of air travel), or at the international level where a state attempts to resist a securitizing move from an ally (i.e. the United States' attempt to securitize Iraqi WMDs at the UN).

It is banal to say that modern security discourses are inseparable from a kind visual and rhetorical drama; the imagery of 9/11 has long appeared to be connected at the hip with contemporary security policy (Williams, 2003:526). Indeed, the recent turn in securitization theory to examining how images facilitate security discourses has argued that imagery provides an emotional appeal which facilitates the audience's 'purchase' of the act (Vuori, 2010:260). Security discourse does not however, have to contain visual images to be dramatic. Verbal tropes such as Condoleezza Rice's "we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud" are just as effective in conveying a sense of urgency and drama (Wolf Blitzer, 2003). While securitization theorists consistently invoke the notion of drama in explaining securitization, what I will call the theatrical metaphor, there is no explicit role for drama in their theoretical framework. Instead, the focus of attention has been the social and linguistic conditions, such as trustworthiness, which allow agents to speak convincingly to audiences about security issues. A focus on the dramatic aspects of security speech acts brings to the fore concerns about the role of emotion in convincing an audience of a given threat. The specific emotion we are concerned with here is fear⁸, and when and how audiences appraise the claims of a securitizing agent in a way which produces an affective resonance. Securitizing agents must communicate their claims in a way which produces subjective feelings of fear, the conscious and unconscious state of mind and body which is associated with threat and danger. Without subjective feelings of fear, the audience will not be motivated to see new security measures as legitimate and the speech act will not succeed.

⁸ This project emphatically acknowledges that more emotions than just fear are often at play in the politics of security. Love of one's country in the form of nationalist sentiment is deeply tied to security discourse (Crawford, 2000). Humiliation plays a strong role in the security problematique in the Middle East (Fattah and Fierke, 2009). This project simply identifies fear as a starting point and works from there.

This shift in analysis from the social and linguistic conditions of the security speech act towards affect is predicated upon the novel synthesis of appraisal theory and securitization theory. Appraisal theory is a popular approach in cognitive psychology to the study of emotions. It argues, in its simplest form, that the subjective feelings of emotion we experience are the result of the mind constantly evaluating or appraising the world around us. Different emotions are not ‘locked in’ to specific events, but are rather predicated on particular patterns of appraisal. In this view the emotion of fear is predicated upon an appraisal of a situation with a high motivational relevance, a high motivational incongruence, and a perceived inability to cope. Audiences who collectively appraise the claims of an agent based on this criteria will more likely experience feelings of fear. This analytical reorientation has two immediate implications for descriptive securitization theory. First, a renewed focus on the more dynamic and versatile concept of fear allows securitization theory to overcome many of the criticisms leveled at it for its myopic focus on practices of securitization framed exclusively in terms of existential threat. Second, because the constitutive criteria of appraisals are largely socially influenced, i.e. what is motivationally relevant is often socially constituted, appraisal theory offers a broader basis to understand how social identity influences the outcome of securitization. By grounding the experience of fear in social relations, this project returns securitization theory to its roots – a synthesis of classical political realism focused on fear and social constructivism focused on social identity (Williams, 2003:514).

Finally, this project is not just concerned with the absence of affect in the securitization analysis and how this skews prescriptions. It is also concerned with how one might leverage an affectively conscious form of securitization theory in order to better theorize interventions into the language of security. Simply put, if we recognize that the practice of speaking security is

also a practice of engendering emotion, how can we use this insight to overturn the logic of security when it becomes dominant? The short answer to this question is by changing the emotional dynamics security speech act. Using the example of Realist academia and their failure to successfully contest the securitization of Iraq in 2003, I suggest that these kinds of interventions need to focus more on tailoring their message towards audience appraisal, and less on contesting the strategic calculus of securitizing agents (Neoconservative commentators in this instance).

This argument is developed across the next four chapters which can be broadly grouped into two distinct parts. In the first part Chapters 2 and 3 examines and critiques how the securitization literature views the possibility of intervening in the language of security. Chapter 2 locates intervention strategies squarely within normative approaches of the literature which discuss the values and harms associated with securitization, and how we ought to manage them; what I refer to as the ethics of securitization. This chapter works to develop an evaluative framework to determine which of these approaches offers the most viable form of practice. The focus here is on examining which ethics of securitization provides a ‘thick’ conception of agency which allows prescriptions to be translated into political practice. Chapter 3 takes this evaluative framework and applies it to four distinct ethics of securitization, all of which offer a distinct strategy of intervention. In doing so I demonstrate not only are the current ethics of securitization characterized by relatively ‘thin’ views of agency, but that this kind of agency is predicated on a view of the security speech act as a rational/deliberative exchange. Current ethical theories of securitization are likely to fail because of a bias towards viewing security speech acts in a way that obscures the central role of emotion.

In the second part Chapters 4 and 5 focus on restructuring securitization theory to account for affect and on how this changes our understanding of intervening in the practice of securitization. Chapter 4 lays out a broad theoretical argument for combining appraisal theory with securitization theory in order to explain how an audience's appraisal of claims of threat elicits emotional responses. This shifts the analytical focus of securitization from the concept of existential threat to the more flexible concept of fear. Chapter 5 applies this new framework of securitization to the case of the 2003 Iraq War, a commonly examined case in securitization studies, and looks at why Realist academia failed to prevent Neoconservative political commentators from securitizing the issue of Iraq. Beyond yielding greater analytical insight, this example suggests how an appraisal variant of securitization theory more fundamentally forces us to rethink about when securitization is morally justified.

Chapter 2 - Securitization and Ethics:

Towards an Evaluation

Why should we think of security issues in terms of ethics? At first reaction, security is intimately about survival. The goal of survival is not to think of things in terms of right and wrong, responsibility and obligations, or the need to avoid harming others; it is to survive, to go on existing. The sentiment of “[l]et us think first of all how to survive, thereafter about everything else”, as described by early realist John Herz, left many with the belief that moral choices can only really be made once survival, and in turn security, is ensured (Huysmans quoting Herz, 1998a:234). Discussions of ethics are to take place inside the state, where the good life could be contemplated separately from the anarchic and inherently dangerous world of international politics (Wight, 1966).

While the exclusion of ethics from the study of International Relations has endured in some approaches, especially neorealism, the study of ethics and security has experienced vibrant growth elsewhere. Nicholas Rengger has attributed this growth in large part to a resurgence of interest in just war theory led by Michael Walzer beginning in the 1970s (2000:758). While just war theory has occupied a considerable portion of research on the ethics of security, the field has also branched out into new areas such as the ethics of counter-terrorism (Crawford, 2003), post-conflict reconstruction (Orend, 2002), humanitarian intervention (Nardin, 2002), economic sanctions (Gordon, 1999), and the ethics of weaponry (Cohn and Ruddick, 2004), just to name a few.⁹ These approaches represent a burgeoning interest in the moral implications of the use of force in world politics.

There is however, another more recent and less discussed approach to examining ethics and security. Here I refer to the *ethics of securitization*. The key difference between this subject and the ethics of security is point of departure. The ethics of security literature engages with the

⁹ See Lang (2010) and Sheppard (2010) for a good overview of this research.

consequences of security issues, namely war, but increasingly issues such as ethnic conflict and terrorism. In contrast, the ethics of securitization focuses its analysis prior to the consequences of security, and on the actual *constitution* of security issues themselves. This is premised on the view that speaking the language of security is ‘ethical-political choice’ in and of itself (Aradau, 2004a:393).¹⁰ The first field of inquiry asks ‘given this security situation, what is a morally acceptable response?’ The second asks “given this particular situation, is it morally acceptable to view it *as a matter of security*?” The substantive difference is that the latter approach understands the framing of something as a security issue as a distinct act in-and-of-itself; a security speech act involving the linking of existential threats to some referent, typically the state. In the case of the 2003 Iraq war discussions of the treatment of prisoners and coalition obligations for reconstruction were all preceded by the original discussion of whether or not Iraq constituted a security issue. The ethics of securitization then, broadly speaking, refers to the negotiation of values and harms with the securitization of a given issue in order to realize some moral purpose. This involves a moral calculus as to why a securitization is right or wrong, and a corresponding view of practice or conduct to achieve moral ends.

If the study of the ethics of security is well established, then the study of the ethics of securitization is in its infancy. While debates over the responsibility of the security analyst’s role in establishing security issues continued through the late 1990s (Eriksson 1999a, 1999b; Goldman, 1999; Waever, 1999; Williams, 1999), only a handful of articles have engaged with the ethics of securitization in any systemic manner (Williams, 2003; Aradau, 2004a, 2006; Huysman, 1998b, 2002; Taureck, 2006; Benkhe, 2006; Hayward, 2006; Floyd, 2007). All of these works identify explicit harms associated with securitization, such as the role securitization

¹⁰To be clear Aradau only states that ‘desecuritization’ is an ethical-political choice, but a logical extension of her argument would extend this characterization to securitization as well.

plays in the narrowing of democratic contestation (Aradau, 2004a), the creation of space for exceptional and authoritarian measures (Williams, 2003), and the reification of specific groups such as migrants into threats (Huysmans, 2002). Despite sometimes differing on the harms involved, and whether or not one should be categorically against the practice of securitization, these approaches are united by a common desire to develop strategies for intervening in security speech acts. It is this common thematic thrust which makes the current literature on the ethics of securitization synonymous with intervening in the language of security.

If the ethics of securitization literature already outlines a variety of normative interventions into the security speech act, then the question becomes how do we choose which one? This gives rise to the need for some sort of comparison between different normative theories – an evaluation. It might be tempting here to try and distinguish between a broader ethic of securitization and the specific practice or strategy of intervention it advocates. This would be a mistake given how deeply former is implicated in the latter. For example, if one sees the harm of securitization in how it reifies vulnerable minorities into a threatening and dangerous ‘other’, then one’s strategy of intervention will focus on constitution and realization of alternative identities (Huysmans, 1995). It is because the tactical, practical decisions of how to intervene in a security speech act are ultimately linked back to some form of moral claims that any attempt to separate the two impoverishes our understanding of both.

This prompts the difficult question of whether we can take a comprehensive ethical framework, including both moral claims and prescribed practices, and judge it only on the viability of the latter. In response I refer to the seemingly banal observation of Richard Price that there are limits to moral possibility in world politics (2008:193). That which is ethical must also

be possible.¹¹ This sentiment captures a broadly popular position in moral philosophy, epitomized by ethicists like Peter Singer, that any theory of ethics must allow for some tangible form of practice (2011:2). The relative value of an ethical framework then should not only be judged on the basis of a particular conception of ‘the good’ it attempts to realize. It should also be judged on its ability to be translated into viable form of practice.

What this proposition draws our attention to is the need for a reflection on the conceptualization of *agency* within various ethics of securitization. The word agency means many things in the study of politics (and ethics), but here we attribute to it a very narrow meaning: the ability of an individual or a group to intervene in and disrupt or turn back a security speech act, or more simply, to desecuritize¹². In this context agency is the means by which an ethics of securitization is linked to a viable form of practice.

The problem however, is that even if we take agency as the standard from which we can adjudicate the viability of different ethics of securitization, there exists no single standard view on what this kind of agency looks like. Up to now, the broader field of securitization theory has examined a wide variety of different kinds of securitizing agents, such as political elites (Waever, 1995), security bureaucrats (Bigo, 2002; Huysmans, 2002), business communities (Åtland and Ven Bruusgaard, 2010), scientific communities (Vuori, 2010), political opposition movements (Wilkinson, 2007), humanitarian organizations (Vaughn, 2009), religious groups (Lausten and Waever, 2000), and even artists in civil society (Möller, 2007).¹³ Theoretically, anyone could be an either a securitizing or desecuritizing agent, but practically there are

¹¹ For those concerned with Kant’s naturalistic fallacy, deriving an ‘ought’ from an ‘is’, I share with Price (2008:fn 8) the view that “Kant himself suggested that the demands of ethics stand independent of empirical likelihood but not to the point where ethics demands the demonstrably impossible”.

¹² While ‘desecuritize’ is the popular term in the literature, this project takes a more processual view of securitization, where agents may wish to unmake already existing security issues, as well as prevent their emergence. In this respect, the more general term of ‘intervention’ is used more frequently.

¹³ This list is not inclusive.

some clear barriers such as authority, credibility, social position, etc. (Buzan *et al*, 1998:31).

Who can and cannot be a (de)securitizing agent and to what extent is a central theme of empirical securitization research, and it is also one of the most debated topics.

What I propose then is a focus on the ‘thickness’ of the agency envisioned within each respective ethic of securitization. ‘Thickness’ here refers to whether a view of agency engages with the central thematic debates in the securitization literature over what constitutes agency in the security speech act. A thick view of agency would A) identify the specific agent involved in intervening in the security speech act (i.e. political elites, journalists, etc.) B) suggests a specific discursive strategy to be employed (i.e. what language will be used to counter the claims of the securitizing agent), and C) why is this agent uniquely positioned as compared to other social actors to change the direction of security move? In contrast, an ethic of securitization defined by a ‘thin’ account of agency would fail to elaborate on these key themes and in turn fail translate into a viable form of political practice. It is from the distinction between ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ accounts of agency we can adjudicate viability of differing ethics of securitization, and in turn what understand how we can best intervene in the language of security.

This argument is developed in four sections. It begins with a brief overview of the Copenhagen School of securitization theory. The second section centers on drawing out and developing the concept of agency within the Copenhagen School. This is achieved focusing on the approach’s normative implications and contrasting this with a neorealist view of security. Working from a well-defined view of agency in securitization, the third section shifts the focus to problematizing agency in order to show its underlying indeterminate character. This involves looking at two methodological moves made by the Copenhagen School – social sedimentation and universalization of the agent – which taken together create a significant theoretical

contradiction. In order to show that this isn't simply an idiosyncrasy of the Copenhagen School, I demonstrate how successive variants securitization theory have come to be organized into differing 'strands' (descriptive, practical, normative), and how this is a function of continuing disagreement over the concept of agency. In the final section I argue although the concept of agency in securitization is deeply contested, we can focus on the constitutive debates, the debates over what is at stake in conceptualizing agency in securitization, and develop an evaluative criteria. This criteria is premised on the distinction between thick and thin agency, which allows us to create an evaluative framework for differing ethics of securitization.

Securitization Theory – Origins

Even if we start at the commonly agreed to institutional foundations of securitization theory, the Copenhagen Conflict and Peace Research Institute (COPRI), more commonly known as the 'Copenhagen School' (McSweeney, 1996; Huysmans, 1998c; Williams, 2003), the question remains what particular variant of securitization theory should we examine? As Huysmans points out, early formulations of Ole Waever's concept of security as a speech act can be traced back to as early as 1987 (Huysmans, 1998c: 493). This review looks at the 1998 text *Security: A New Framework for Analysis (SNFA)* by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde as its point of departure. The justification for this is that *SNFA* was last major substantive work on the theory of securitization to come from COPRI before it was disbanded in 2004, and that more recent work often refers to this text when outlining the basics of the theory (for example see Vaughn, 2009; Vuori, 2010; Åtland and Ven Bruusgaard, 2010).¹⁴ In this respect *SNFA* can be seen as the 'canonical' text of the Copenhagen School.

¹⁴ For more comprehensive overviews of the Copenhagen School see Huysmans, 1998c; Williams, 2003; and C.A.S.E., 2006

In *SNFA* the concept of security is reoriented from the objective category of the military protection of the state, to the more abstract notion of a generalized logic. The ‘securityness’ of an issue is not determined so much by its substantive content, but rather the process through which an issue is established in the broader realm of politics. For Buzan *et al* “‘Security’ is a move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue as a special kind of politics or as above politics” (1998:23). To explain this kind of framing the authors, principally Waever in this chapter, suggest a spectrum to conceive of different levels of politicization. Depoliticized issues are any public issue that does not occupy public decision making or the interest of the state. Politicized issues are those that are part of public policy requiring some sort of governmental decision. Securitized issues are those of existential importance as they threaten the existence of the body politic. These issues are emergency issues requiring exceptional measures to be undertaken by governments that could not be otherwise resolved through typical political processes.

Depoliticized ←———— Politicized —————→ Securitized

For Buzan *et al* no issue is permanently fixed in this spectrum. The placement of issues can vary across political communities and across time (1998:24). Issues are moved across the spectrum by securitizing and desecuritizing moves, actions undertaken by different agents to employ (or contest) the logic of security to transform the status of an issue. Securitizing moves, which is the central focus for the Copenhagen School, begin with a speech act which enunciates an existential threat. This speech act is unique from other speech acts that are constitutive of social reality, such as naming a ship or making a promise, because it possesses “a specific rhetorical structure” that communicates a need for “survival, priority of action ‘because if the problem is not handled now it will be too late, and we will not exist to remedy the future’”

(1998:26). The agent doesn't just securitize an issue by invoking an existential threat however, the threat must broadly resonate with the audience. In Buzan *et al*'s view "Securitization is not fulfilled only by breaking rules (which can take many forms), nor solely by existential threats (which can lead to nothing), but by cases of existential threats that legitimize the breaking of the rules" (1998:25). Legitimacy then becomes the hallmark of a successful security speech act.

At the core of the concept of existential threat there is always a referent, something that can be identified as the very 'thing' that is being threatened. Buzan *et al* are clear that "the referent object itself does not create the securitization", but rather it is the securitizing agent who identifies the referent and discursively links it to the logic of existential threat (Ibid). This allows the analyst to examine the variety of referents found in security discourses (i.e. environment, drugs, terrorism) while maintaining the logical coherency of the concept. Security is not one 'thing', nor is it 'everything', it is the framing of 'something' within a certain logic. This answers the concerns held by conventional security studies regarding the dilution of the concept of security to the point where it is meaningless (Deudney, 1990).

Not everyone is in the position to make a securitizing move, and even those that are may fail for other reasons. Buzan *et al* identify a series 'facilitating conditions' which increase the chances for success in a securitizing speech act, including: employing the 'grammar of security'; speaking from a position of authority; and the features of alleged threats (1998:33). The 'grammar of security' refers to the rhetorical structure of the speech: does it provide a clear picture of existential threat and a point of no return? Equally important is the social position of agents. How trustworthy is the speaker? Are we talking about a well-established political elite or some fringe pundit? Finally, assertions of existential threats are more convincing if they are about issues already seen as threatening. For example, fears about new strains of influenza can

be more effectively framed as threatening if the audience can draw upon memories of a past devastating outbreak.

This review of securitization theory is self-consciously absent any of the major critiques leveled against the Copenhagen School in recent years. Many of these critiques will emerge in forthcoming chapters. The goal of this review is only to provide a basic overview of securitization theory in order to facilitate the impending discussion of agency which we now turn to.

Copenhagen and Normative Possibility

One the most significant departures of securitization theory from conventional security studies are its normative views. Instead of viewing security as a condition of safety to be aspired to, the approach treats it as a general logic that can be brought to bear on a wide array of social issues with harmful effects. While Buzan *et al* state that in “some cases securitization of issues may be unavoidable, as when states are faced with an implacable or barbarian aggressor”¹⁵, their position is clear:

“National security should not be idealized. It work to silence opposition and has given power holders many opportunities to exploit “threats” for domestic purposes, to claim a right to handle something with less democratic control and constraint. Our belief, therefore, is not “the more security the better.” Basically, security should be seen as a failure of normal politics” (1998:29)

What is compelling about this statement is that it represents one of the first clearly normative views about how the language of security ought to be managed. The ethical position elaborated here is not about what security measures should be employed to respond to a threat (as in the ethics of security), but about the very constitution of the security issue itself. This shift is encapsulated in the grammatical transition from the noun of security to the verb of securitize.

¹⁵ It is important to point out here that the notion of ‘barbarians’ itself is an intersubjectively produced characterization. Statements like these point to limits in the constructivist character of the Copenhagen School.

This makes it an action undertaken by agents who makes a choice to securitize. For Buzan *et al* it “is always a political choice to securitize or accept a securitization” (1998:29). Recognizing that securitization is a process in which choices are made opens an ethical space to debate practice. If security issues simply exist because they are a product of perennial and immutable state conflict rather than an intersubjective social construction, then any space to critique the rightness or wrongness of the label ‘security’ is closed. Concerns over agency, over what should or should not be done, can only be understood if there is an initial recognition of choice in the first place. Ethics and agency then become essential features of understanding practices of securitization.

This position can be better understood by contrasting it to more orthodox views of security, such as Stephen Walt’s position discussed in the previous chapter. Walt argued for the maintaining the concept of security as focused on interstate war in order to preserve its conceptual coherence and to avoid any “counter productive tangents” which might weaken the rigorous social-scientific basis of security studies (1991:222-223).

At first glance Buzan *et al* and Walt seem to be making comparatively similar arguments. For example, in Walt’s review of the so-called renaissance of security studies he commends the (traditional) field for being “shaped by the belief that a well-informed policy debate is the best way to avoid the disasters that are likely when national policy is monopolized by a few self-interested parties” (191:232). At face value this seems to echo Buzan *et al*’s desire to maintain an open and public contestation of security issues which have seen their debate narrowed.

However, the kind of participation that Walt envisions in the debate over security is significantly narrower than what is envisioned by the Copenhagen School. First, as the concept of security is only meaningful when used in relation to military conflict between states,

unconventional uses of the label 'security' (i.e. used in the context of the environment, energy, immigration, etc.), can only be rejected for not possessing the objective 'substance' of security. Second, when confronted with "realism's traditional pessimism about the prospects for a durable peace" (Walt, 1991:225), the notion of desecuritizing issues of international security becomes inconceivable as they are a natural product of International Relations, ordered by the structural principle of anarchy. While manageable to some extent through prudential statecraft, they are ultimately immutable. Third, Walt argues that security analysts should be aware that the "more serious danger [of] the politicization of research support" and avoid this by speaking from strictly social scientific perspective to inform the decisions of national policy makers (1991:230). This is a view of the analyst not debating securitization per se, but of debating the effective measures to be taken by the state after securitization has been firmly established. Both securitization theorists and neorealists desire an open and robust contestation of security issues. It is at the point in the causal chain in the formation of security issues that they differ. The point of contestation for neorealism is largely after the issue has been constituted in the realm of national security. In contrast, the point of contestation for securitization theorists begins at the point of the enunciation of existential threat in the speech act.

This comparison highlights how the inherently contingent view of security within the Copenhagen School offers an opening for agency that is simply not present in neorealist views of security, or is so in a much more constrained form. Indeed Walt would have excoriated the seemingly irresponsible security analysts for being 'political', whereas Buzan *et al* emphasize that securitization is an inherently political choice, one that has to be reflected upon with some degree of responsibility (see also Waever, 1999). In the latter approach the window for agency,

and subsequent ethical reflection, is opened further than ever envisioned by neorealism. But just how widely does this window open?

The Contested Character of Agency

Here we run into contradictory signals from the Copenhagen School. Different methodological moves taken by Buzan *et al* work simultaneously to both enlarge and diminish the type and ability of agents who wish to either securitize or desecuritize. The first of these moves becomes apparent when the Copenhagen School attempts to differentiate their work from their broader subfield of Critical Security Studies (CSS). CSS can be envisioned as a discipline defined by dissatisfaction with neorealist views of security, but otherwise characterized by methodological pluralism (Krause, 1998; Krause and Williams, 1996). It includes not only the constructivist Copenhagen School, but variants of critical theory (Williams, 2003) and post-structuralism (Hansen, 1997).

While the Copenhagen School has much in common with these approaches, it has explicitly tried to distance itself from them with a much more limited view of social constitution. In contrast to an easily malleable social world where identity and meaning are fluid and flexible, the Copenhagen authors' argue that "even the socially constituted is often *sedimented as structure* and becomes so relatively stable as practice that one must do analysis also on the basis that it continues" (1998:35 emphasis added). In this sense Buzan *et al* attempt to limit their 'radicalness' by insisting that the social structures that the security speech act takes place in are often relatively stable and therefore difficult to contest. Challenging the authority of an agent of securitization, such as a defense minister, is more difficult if the social capital of that position, the trustworthiness of the public servant, cannot be easily contested. This leads to the impression that they are engaging in a more modest, even traditional project with the self-acknowledged

limited intent to “grasp security constellations and thereby steer them into benign interactions”, which “stands in contrast to the ‘critical’ purposes of CSS, which point to a more wholesale refutation of current power wielders” (Ibid). Huysmans’ pithy use of the term “ontological gerrymandering” on this point is insightful as it highlights how the Copenhagen authors have manipulated “analytic boundaries” to leave some phenomena as unproblematically reproduced, especially the identity of the state (1998c:494).¹⁶

Thus, the Copenhagen group’s notion of “social sedimentation”, or perhaps Huysmans’ more honest formulation of “ontological gerrymandering”, imputes a narrowing of agency. Securitizing agents are subject to a kind of path dependency, only able to walk successfully between the most sedimented social structures, while those structures themselves are resistant to change. The state as the referent for the object of security becomes immutable as the practice of ‘securing’ the state becomes sedimented into the social order. It is not only the facilitating conditions that limit the success of the security speech act, but also by the broader ontology that which holds certain social relations as wholly inflexible.

This leads us to the second methodological move of the Copenhagen School which takes a view of agency in the opposite direction. Here I focus on the subtle, but significant change in the discussion regarding who can and cannot be a securitizing agent. We can measure this shift by comparing views on this issue between Ole Waever’s formulation of the securitizing agent in his 1995 work *Securitization and Desecuritization*, and the more sophisticated formulation found in the 1998 SNFA.¹⁷ In his earlier writing Waever discusses a significantly narrower view of the securitizing agent. In this iteration, by “*naming [of] a certain development a security problem, the “state” can claim a special right*, one that will, in the final instance, always be defined by the

¹⁶ Huysmans’ borrows the term “ontological gerrymandering” from Woolgar and Pawluch (1985).

¹⁷ It could be argued that this change was a result of the collective authorship of a SNFA, however the text is clear that Waever is the primary author of this section (Buzan *et al*, 1998:viii).

states and its elites.” (1995:54 emphasis original). In this iteration, securitization is a tool used by political elites to take power over issues, specifically the survival the political system and elite privilege in Eastern and Central Europe during the Cold War. Here the idea of the agent is limited to one particular social position: political elites.¹⁸

This formulation lacks the broad universality of the 1998 formulation where, although some people are more accepted as the “voices of security”, no one is “excluded from attempts to articulate alternative interpretations of security” (Buzan *et al*, 1998:31). This shift is small, but significant as it moves the agent from one particular archetype to a more universal category; the act of securitization opens to everyone. In this move agency is widened as the ability to securitize (and potentially desecuritize) is opened to other parties. This shift can be attributed to the work of the so-called Paris School, especially Didier Bigo (1996), whose research challenged the Copenhagen group’s narrow understanding of the securitizing agent by focusing on role of bureaucratic politics and security professionals in securitizing issues (C.A.S.E., 2006:457; Huysmans, 2002:55). The Copenhagen group’s reaction to Bigo’s work was not to argue which particular role was better positioned to function as an agent of securitization (i.e. political elite vs. professional security bureaucrats). Rather, their approach was to completely reformulate their view of the agent by acknowledging the “field is structured or biased” to certain positions, but that “no one conclusively “holds” the power of securitization” (Buzan *et al*, 1998:31). In three short years the view of the securitizing agent went from a narrow category of political elites, to security professionals, to potentially anyone.

The tension between the Copenhagen School’s emphasis of ‘social sedimentation’ and expanding view of securitizing agents creates a contradiction that is too sharp to ignore. If we

¹⁸The exception to this is in his minor discussion of societal security where he alludes to the “thorny” question of who speaks for a society in the instance of a securitization of social identity (Waever, 1995:69).

take the argument of social sedimentation seriously we need to accept the idea that some identities crystallize and become durable. The problem is that at the same time the Copenhagen School is making this claim it also opening the field of potential securitizing agents by shifting focus from political elites to a model of 'facilitating conditions'. The consequence of this model however, is an implicit recognition that things such as social position, the position of authority and trustworthiness of the securitizing agent, are essentially fluid. People can develop the authority, the necessary social capital, to become a convincing securitizing agent. In short, identity can change. But how do you reconcile a set of facilitating conditions that suggests identity is fluid with an ontology of social sedimentation where identity hardens and becomes static? The short answer is you can't, and that the tension between the two reflects an ongoing indeterminacy over agency within the Copenhagen School.

The corollary of this observation is that without a clear view as to who can affect the outcome of a security speech act, and how, it becomes all the more difficult for normative approaches to devise strategies for intervention. How can we know how to intervene in the language of security if the Copenhagen School cannot coherently tell us who and how a security discourse can be altered? It might be hoped that more advanced securitization literature might resolve this issue and give a more determinate view of agency, but as the discussion below illustrates this is not the case.

Beyond Copenhagen – The Diffusion of Securitization Theory

If the Copenhagen School introduced an internally conflicted view of agency in securitization, then further research has only contributed to the problem. The mixed blessing of an invigorated securitization research agenda has been a wealth of empirical case studies examining the role of different securitizing agents on one hand, and on the other an ever

increasingly complicated set of views as to who can securitize and how one can go about doing so. This has led to a great diffusion in the conceptualization of agency across the literature as analysts work to catalogue an ever growing number of actors and rhetorical strategies involved in securitization.

Some analysts are keenly aware of this development and actively work to discipline differing conceptions of securitizing agency. For example, Claudia Aradau's work on the ethics of securitization has emphasized that security analysts themselves are often complicit in the practice of securitization, and that this in turn should prompt some degree of ethical-political reflection on their work (2004a:389). This is premised on a highly permissive view of agency where the academic analyst risks reproducing the security speech act just by discussing a security issue (Huysmans, 2002). In a particularly intense critique of this view, Rita Taureck calls for a bifurcation of the securitization studies, with one subfield dedicated to the empirical analysis of securitization and another to the ethical and moral implications of securitization (2006:53). This approach explicitly rejects Aradau's view of permissive agency, arguing that analysts can and should keep their normative concerns separate from the positivist analysis of "what does security do?" (Taureck, 2006:58).

One way to visualize this kind of debate is to see recent securitization research as organized along a continuum of different conceptions of agency – ranging from extremely narrow or closed positions (i.e. securitization is only possible under a very strict set of opportunity conditions) to very broad or open positions (i.e. securitization is so plausible agents may even incur inadvertently). This allows us to formulate a typology of different positions within the literature organized in relation to differing views on agency and their concomitant normative implications. The typology discussed below organizes these positions within three

different types of securitization theory: descriptive, practical, and normative. This is not proposed as a normative typology intended to map out how securitization studies 'should' be organized, as Taureck tries to achieve, but rather a descriptive tool to highlight different positions within the debate over agency.

Descriptive variants are either entirely mute on the normative implications of securitization theory (Balzacq, 2006), or wishes to explicitly segregate them from a more positivistic understanding of securitization processes (Taureck, 2006). Balzacq's contribution on the role of audiences in the securitization process is highly instructive of this regard. Balzacq rejects what he refers to as the 'internalist' view of securitization and its focus on the agent and prefers an 'externalist' view that focuses on the audience and the social, cultural, and historical context in which they are situated (2005: 181). Seemingly breaking with the constructivist foundations of the Copenhagen School, Balzacq suggests that "for one, language does not construct reality; at best it shapes our perception of it", and that accordingly, securitization theory neglects "external or brute threats" (Ibid).

The corollary of this is that securitization is highly dependent upon appealing to the context the audience is situated in, a context that is 'real' and filled with 'objective threats'. The agent then is secondary to the process of securitization, which is really contingent upon contextual background (i.e. how can one draw upon collective knowledge to articulate something as a threat?). This is an extremely narrow view of agency which sees the process of securitization as more the product of fortuitous circumstances than any action undertaken by the agent. The most analysts can do is engage in a positivistic mapping of the speech act in terms of "a tractable number of variables to investigate in order to gain a better understanding of the

linguistic manufacture of threat” (2005:171). Sociological and linguistic description then becomes the goal of securitization theory.

The second approach within this typology is what I call practical securitization theory. Here I use the example of Mark Salter’s (2008) work on the securitization and desecuritization of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority in the wake air transit concerns after 9/11. Salter’s work calls for an “analytical disaggregation of the actor-audience model” where the security speech act is examined as it plays out amongst different audiences, namely popular, elite, technocratic, and scientific (2008:342). Taken in isolation Salter’s work is compelling because it highlights how speech acts often play out differently across separate audiences and how securitization moves can fail with some and succeed with others. What is important for this discussion however, is how he frames his contribution to securitization theory at the end of the article. Acknowledging the debate taking place between Aradau (2004a), Taureck (2006), he argues:

“While this article does not engage with this debate extensively, we would argue that , tactically, analysts and experts must understand the political dynamics of successful securitization and desecuritization processes if they wish to intervene...*There is an assumption in this debate about securitization/desecuritization that experts are significant or important voices.*” (Salter, 2008:343 emphasis added)

While the debate over the normative implications of securitization theory is important, ultimately, any discussion regarding intervention strategies must be built upon a solid, practical understanding of the processes of securitization/desecuritization. Salter is cautiously open to the possibility that the security analyst may intervene in the act, and thus be open to the idea that security analysts themselves possess some degree of agency. But only by understanding the substance of the act, with a special focus on how agents are received differently across audiences, can one have a meaningful discussion about strategies to limit securitization, or to

desecuritize altogether. This kind of theory seeks descriptive analysis of the act, and then reflects upon the practical options this leaves open to normative theorizing.

The third and final approach in this typology is what I refer to as normative securitization theory. In some ways this can be read as diametrically opposed to descriptive securitization theory. For these theorists, principally Aradau, Huysmans (and possibly Williams), normative questions of responsibility and harm, as well as the means to intervene in the practice of securitization, are at the forefront of their work. Jef Huysmans' (2002) work on the normative dilemma of writing security is a clear example of this kind of approach. The normative dilemma can be understood as the problem analysts face when discussing issues of security whereby the act of discussing it reinforces the discursive links that frame it as a security issue in the first place. For example, when a security analyst looks "for a correlation between Turkish immigrants and trade in heroin, they establish a discursive link, irrespective of whether the correlation is confirmed or not" (Huysmans, 2002:43). The dilemma becomes sharper when it is recognized that even those who contest the 'securityness' of certain issues are unable to do so without reinforcing the discursive links that give it that character. To talk about whether or not Turkish immigrants are a threat opens the possibility of seeing them as a threat in the first place.

For Huysmans' this problem is predicated upon a shift from a representational view of language where the analyst merely says objectively what security is, to a performative view of language where the language of the analyst "operates as a mediating instrument that brings social practices into a particular communicative institutionalized framework" (2002:44). The very act of speaking security is normative as because it is affirming what security ought to be and thus "speaking and writing about security is never innocent" (2002:43). While Taureck argues that an expert's analysis of securitization moves is not repeating the act of securitization as such, for

Huysmans even that analytical discussion reinforces the discursive links that frame the issue as a matter of security in the first place. This is a radically permissive view of securitizing agency, where analysts themselves can inadvertently reinforce the logic of security in issues.

Thus, the original tensions surrounding the Copenhagen School's formulation of agency continues to be reproduced in divergent approaches to securitization research. The spectrum of views represented in this typology demonstrates an ongoing debate over the character of securitizing agency. For the project at hand this means that without a clear view of agency to inform us of how agents can intervene in a security speech act we are left no standard from which to judge the intervention strategies proposed by the current ethics of securitization. With no definitive standard to determine which ethic of securitization offers the most viable form of practice, how can we go about adjudicating which one offers the best chance for intervening in the language of security?

An Evaluative Principle

Taken in isolation, the idea looking at the practicality of an ethics of securitization to establish its value appears to set the standard of evaluation quite low. It may seem more appealing to evaluate an ethics based on its conception of the good, say perhaps in terms of its comprehensiveness and inclusivity, rather than its practicality. But as the analysis above demonstrates theorists face a significant challenge in showing the viability of ethical intervention in securitization because the concept of agency, that notion of how change is brought about through the securitizing move, is highly contested.

This prompts the question of what an ethics of securitization would precisely have to show to be considered a viable practice. If agency constitutes the evaluative principle on which to judge the ethics of securitization, then what exact criteria needs to be met? Is it good enough

to state who the agent would have to be (i.e. political elite, humanitarian organization, security bureaucrat, etc.)? Would the ethicist have to discuss the specific strategies the agent would to employ (i.e. rhetorical, material, imagery)? What about generalizability? Would a theory of agency designed to desecuritize one particular security issue, such as the threat of terrorism, have to be applicable to other security issues such as narcotic trafficking?

These are difficult questions to ask considering the lack of consensus on the functioning of agency in securitization theory. To put this in context, if one steps back and looks at the progress in the broader study of the ethics of security, especially in regards to the spreading of cosmopolitan and humanitarian norms, constructivists have contributed a great deal to understanding moral agency in the functioning of norm entrepreneurs (Price, 2008:200). In contrast to what may be called ‘thick’ accounts of the agency of norm entrepreneurs operating in transnational advocacy networks, ethicists of securitization operate with a half-formed theoretical edifice.¹⁹ While agency may be an evaluative principle for the ethics of securitization, that principle is currently indeterminate. The best we could hope for is a systematic evaluation is how each ethical framework engages with the different thematic debates surrounding the concept of securitizing agency. These debates include questions over A) who is the specific entity that takes on the role of the agent (i.e. Bigo, 1996, 2002) B) what specific discursive strategies will be employed (i.e. Balzacq, 2006), and C) why this agent is uniquely positioned as compared to other social actors to make security moves (i.e. Salter, 2008).

By staking out ground in these broader debates ethicists of securitization lend plausibility to their theories because they engage with precisely the same issues that general securitization theorists believe are most important to establishing a clear view of agency. The key issue then

¹⁹ This points to an interesting opportunity for bridge building between the research on securitizing agents and norm entrepreneurs, with the former conceived as agents of exception and the latter as agents of normality. This is too significant a discussion to get into here.

becomes to what extent an ethics of securitization engages with this criteria and develops what we can call a 'thick' account of agency. This stands in contrast 'thin' views of agency, accounts which fail to consider specific agents, discursive strategies, or the relative advantages of one agent over another. This kind of measure does not determine whether an approach is definitively possible, because no such measure exists, but whether or not it is plausible.

Finally, just because an ethics of securitization constitutes a *plausible* intervention in the discursive realm, this does not necessarily make it *practical*, which is an important goal of the evaluation being developed here. It may be plausible for me to spend forty hours a week at a soup kitchen to work towards the moral end of alleviating hunger, but given the need sustain myself through employment this is an entirely impractical feat. Here, constructivist work is again of great assistance. In the recent anthology *Moral Limit and Possibility in World Politics* constructivists have argued counterfactuals can play a key role in testing normative possibility. Price has convincingly argued that while critical theorists understandably rebuke international norms for legitimizing the use of force through the laws of war, and thus tacitly accepting the use of violence, consideration of the alternatives to these norms discloses their real value. For example, what would of the 1991 Gulf War look like if there had been no prohibition on the indiscriminately bombing civilian centres (Price, 2008:208)? Kathryn Sikkink has argued more generally for the use of counterfactuals and has noted that a certain type, the 'mental simulation', is particularly relevant to normative theorizing (Sikkink, 2008:99).²⁰

Mental simulations have a long history in normative theorizing, from Plato's imagined Republic to Rawl's veil of ignorance. As long as they are not considered empirical descriptions of reality, as Sikkink argues became the case of the ticking time bomb scenario justifying the use

²⁰ The other types of counterfactuals Sikkink discusses include 'pure counterfactuals', which involve a justification of the status quo to a fictitious alternative, and 'ideal comparison' which compares the status quo to the best imaginable alternative.

of torture in post-9/11 America (2008), they can highlight substantive alternatives to the status quo. By drawing out the dimensions of agency outlined above, we can construct a mental simulation for each approach from which we can speculate as to whether the intervention in the securitization process would work in practice. While this falls short of empirical verification, it still goes further in developing our understanding how the alternative outcomes may come about.

Thus, this chapter has taken the contested concept of agency within securitization theory as an evaluative principle, and drawn from it a more systematic test to gauge the viability of different ethics of securitization. In testing the viability of different ethics of securitization, we scrutinize their ability to be transformed into real-world forms of practice, actual strategies of intervention in the language of security. Again, it must be stressed that this is not an empirical test. Securitization theory lacks the theoretical and empirical maturity to allow for such a move. However, the alternatives to this are to forego any serious scrutiny of the viability of different ethics of securitization, or conversely engage in unrelenting idealism. Because neither of these options is an appealing alternative the onus is now upon us to investigate the promise of differing ethical theories of securitization and the strategies of intervention therein. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Evaluating Different Ethics of Securitization

The ethics of securitization literature offers a prime point of departure for investigating intervention in the language of security because it provides both the moral justification for the need to intervene, as well as outlining specific forms of practice. While this project is undoubtedly focused on the latter dimension, analytically separating the two is problematic given how normative analyses about the harms and values associated with securitization can structure strategies of intervention. Furthermore, the poignancy of the research question of ‘how can one intervene in the language of security’ is weakened if we only examine strategies of intervention, while ignoring the moral claims that drive them.

This chapter advances the discussion by utilizing the evaluatory framework outlined in the previous chapter to examine four distinct ethical theories of securitization. The goal of this evaluation is to highlight the possibility and limitations these approaches may face when engaging in their respective intervention and disruption of the securitization process. This is, at its core, a comparative analysis which examines the strengths and weaknesses of different ways of intervening in the language of security. The ethical theories examined here include Jef Huysman’s aesthetic of everydayness, Michael C. Williams argumentative ethics, Claudia Aradau’s emancipatory ethics, and Rita Floyd’s consequentialist ethics.

Before continuing, a brief review of the evaluative framework is in order. The evaluation is extremely narrow in that it focuses on the practicality of various ethical frameworks for intervening in the securitization process. Critiquing each theory’s respective notion of the ‘good’ is beyond the scope of work here, although the reader may recognize some clear problems themselves.

Whether or not an ethics can be judged as a viable form of practice is based on its conception of agency, the ability to elicit securitizing moves in a given situation. Lacking

consensus on any definitive view of agency in the securitization literature, this approach examines whether an ethical framework engages in the three thematic dimensions of agency that are central to debates in the securitization literature: who the agent is, what discursive strategies they employ, and why that agent is particularly well positioned to elicit security moves as opposed to other potential agents. Engagement with these themes is taken as constitutive of a ‘thick’ view of agency, one that offers a viable form of practice, and therefore a realistic option for intervention. This view of agency is then exercised in a counterfactual mental simulation asking ‘what would have changed if this intervention had occurred?’ The goal of these simulations is to ascertain how these interventions *might* play out under empirical circumstances. This is *not* to be taken as an empirical validation of the ethical framework’s understanding of agency. The theoretical and empirical immaturity of securitization theory makes such a move implausible. Also, considering the novelty of these strategies, we lack a substantive historical baseline to test their effectiveness. Historical circumstances can inform us to the kind of situations such strategies may encounter, however.

Case selection in this process is highly important. This involves clearly delineating different ethical frameworks for managing securitization. Fortunately, the study of securitization is relatively novel and this leaves us with only four distinct examples. For the purposes of this chapter an ethics of securitization is defined as a normative framework that is intended to guide practical interventions into a securitization process. The intention of these interventions is to obstruct the securitizing move with the goal of limiting what is perceived as the harmful spread of the logic of securitization. As mentioned in the last chapter there are typically three harms associated with securitization moves including: the closure of democratic politics, the legitimization of exceptional and authoritarian measures, and the identification of a particular

groups as ‘the enemy’. As outlined below, different ethical theories of securitization discuss these problems in unique ways.

There are two important caveats here. First, not all ethics of securitization are categorically against the logic of security. This is to say that while some theorists may view the process of securitization as a universal ill (Huysmans and Aradau), others argue, or at least imply, that it can be useful in some instances, for example when exceptional measures are required to resolve an imminent political problem that could not otherwise be resolved through democratic politics (Williams and Floyd). We must be clear then, that when we are speaking about the ethics of securitization, we are talking about some positions that are categorically against securitization (the desecuritize only views), as well as the positions that are more contingent, based on the specific issue (the securitize only when necessary views). While this differentiation points to a higher degree of nuance amongst approaches, the general view remains that the practice of securitization is problematic. The second caveat is that while the process of securitization is a logic that can be generalized to potentially all spheres of social life, some approaches opt to look at specific issue areas (i.e. the securitization of migration). Others are intended function on a much more generalizeable level.

The findings of this chapter show that the selected cases perform unevenly across the evaluatory framework. Some approaches, such as Aradau’s emancipatory ethics, exhibit a robust conceptualization of agency where specific agents are identified, a clear discursive strategy is evident, and there is some justification as why the intervening agent is in a particularly privileged position to disrupt the securitization process. Others, such as Huysmans’ deconstructivist strategy, lack any clear conceptualization of agency, and are therefore unable to demonstrate how their approach constitutes a viable form social practice. However, even those approaches

which offer a viable form of social practice have difficulty in showing why their particularly strategy for desecuritization would be effective. The logic of security is seen as particularly resilient to intervention and disruption.

The essential finding of this chapter is however, that ethical theories of securitization have a common tendency to rely on a view rational interventions into the securitization process. With the exception of Huysmans' deconstructivist strategy, all other approaches rely on some model rational of engagement and contestation with the securitizer in order to convince an audience of the undesirability of accepting security claims. What is suggested at the end of this chapter is that a fidelity to rational contestation of security ignores the possible broader psychological grounding of securitization based in emotion and group identity. A preliminary argument is made suggesting an alternative psychological understanding of desecuritization at the end of this chapter. The following chapter examines this argument from a more theoretically and empirically informed position that relies on the relevant psychology of emotion literature.

Jef Huysmans and the Aesthetic of Everydayness

Huysmans' 1995 text on migrants as a security problem represents one of the first attempts to explicitly identify the harms associated with securitization and develop a practical strategy to counter them. The approach Huysmans describes has enjoyed some staying power as it remains at the centre of debates surrounding the relationship between security and minority rights (Roe, 2004; Jutila, 2006). Unlike other approaches, Huysmans' focus is on the narrow field of immigration security, and therefore should not be generalized to other contexts. Heavily laden with theatrical metaphors, Huysman's starting point is in a unique rendering of securitization theory, what he terms as the 'modern security drama'.

The modern security drama is rooted in classical realist political thought and begins with the supposition that all political units are organized into larger units (i.e. from tribes to cities to states, etc.) in order to confront other equally large opposing political units. This is not just a form of political organization, but identity production as the internal sphere of the political is constituted as harmonious in contrast to the danger and disharmony that characterizes external relations. The internal sphere is characterized by feelings of trust and unity, whereas the external sphere is driven by fear. This kind of fear is informed by Hobessian subtext in which groups are caught in a war of all against all (Huysmans, 1995:57).

The Hobbessian fear that is associated with security is a fear of death. While humans naturally want to distance themselves from the fear of death, this is particularly difficult as death is fundamentally unknown. Quoting Bauman, Huysmans' acknowledges that it is "impossible to imagine one's own death" (58). The only way to relieve oneself of the fear of death is objectify it into something that can be dealt with tangibly. This involves substituting the fear of death with the fear of those who will cause death, the 'other' who is external to my sphere of trust. This turns the story of security into dramatic struggle for survival (Ibid). Put in terms more relatable terms to securitization theory, my survival is insured once I have identified the existential threat to my community and eliminated it.

The role migrants play in the modern security drama is as the external 'other'. The 'other' enters the internal sphere and disrupts and endangers it. First, the migrant causes disharmony, whether by taking jobs from natives, increasing pressure on limited social services, or being associated with criminal elements; migrants bring the instability of the external sphere into the internal sphere. Second, and more importantly, migrants cause violence, and violence causes death within the internal political sphere. Here Huysman's emphasizes the various

discursive links popular media, especially newspapers, establishes between danger, disease, death and migrants (60).

The internal sphere's response to this threat is a two-step exclusionary strategy based on identity. First, one establishes notions of the authentic community, everything that constitutes those that belong in the internal political unit, against those that do not. Second, one totalizes the identity of migrants by collapsing them into the single universal category of 'the migrant' (61). This identification separates the desirables and undesirables into tangible groups and sets the stage for instrumental action against 'the migrant'. Establishing 'the migrant' as a tangible group allows for anti-migrant exclusionary policies such as calls for separate educational and social services systems (62), but it can also lead to more extreme forms of exclusionary policies. Turning back to the original Hobbesian subtext driving the modern security drama, 'the migrant' can come to personify the abstract fear of death originating outside the political community. Violence against the migrant, up to and including death, is construed as an instrumental lifesaving strategy. Huysmans is careful to emphasize that the securitization of migration does not *necessarily* lead to such a radical conclusion, it simply lays the foundation for such a logic to occur. This logic finds its most extreme form in the Holocaust (64).

It is because the securitization of migration engenders such dark possibilities that it becomes an ethical imperative to develop a strategy of desecuritization. Huysmans rejects attempts focused on arguing that the migrant is not dangerous on empirical grounds (i.e. there is no correlation between migrants and rising crime) on the basis that such moves simply reproduces the dichotomy of native/migrant. To distinguish 'the migrant' as not threatening simply reproduces a monolithic form of cultural identity for migrants, which then presents a

clearer target for anti-immigrant policies. Instead Huysman's suggests a deconstructivist strategy of identity fragmentation.

Those acquainted with poststructuralist approaches to politics will be familiar with the kind of social practice advocated here. "The deconstructivist starts from the assumption that he/she is not looking upon the world from the outside but rather he/she is fully inside of it." (67) The agent and the (discursive) structure are mutually constitutive. What the deconstructivist does is weaken the story of the modern security drama by introducing an alternative narrative. This is premised on two distinct discursive moves. The first is to problematize the artificial concept of 'the migrant' by exposing how it blurs differences between migrants and conceals how they are invested in a variety of identities "e.g. woman, black, worker, mother, etc. – *just like natives are.*" (emphasis added, 67) This transforms 'the migrant' into the more pluralistic notion of 'migrants', and exposes the various forms of identity natives and migrants may have in common. The second part of this strategy focuses on speaking from the marginalized positions of the social world. This means speaking from position of migrants to highlight the subjugation that they experience, and subsequently the arbitrary nature of their exclusion (e.g. the denial of health care, education, business opportunities, civil liberties, etc. on the basis of being a migrant). The first move breaks down the identity of 'the migrant' and makes migrants in general more relatable, while the second move shows the how the exclusionary policies that are sustained by the category of 'the migrant' are oppressive.

In a later article Huysmans (1998) refines his discussion into the challenge of two competing aesthetics: the realist aesthetic of horror and the deconstructivist aesthetic of everydayness. The aesthetic of horror is driven by the terrifying image of the 'other' threatening political community towards the point of existential crisis. While terrifying, the aesthetic of

horror is at the same time the basis of an authentic form of political order, one focused around the heroic leadership of some dictatorial figure that ensures the vitality of the political community (1998:584). Huysmans' central concern is the alluring appeal of the aesthetic of horror. When compared to other modes of political ordering, such as the rational political orders found in Liberalism, the aesthetic of horror offers a sense of vitalism and authentic being that only emerges in mortal conflict. The seductive appeal of the aesthetic of horror is that it provides a spiritual, even theological grounding, against the "formal abstractness of rationalization and technology" (1998:586).

In contrast, an aesthetic of 'everydayness' fragments any notion of migrants as "the other" by presenting them as a mundane part of everyday life. The issues that facilitate the securitization of migrants, i.e. crime, reduced employment opportunities, pressures on social services etc., still remain, but are treated as broader systemic problems issues which are not reducible to the presence of migrants. The aesthetic of everydayness "de-dramatises security questions by contextualizing them in a wider social, economic, and political *problematique* expressed by everyday practices" (emphasis original Huysmans, 1998:588). Migrants become part of everyday life, and while the above problems remain for the community, they are viewed as problems that affect everyone.

The immediate problem with Huysmans' strategy is that it fails to suggest any particular agent responsible for fostering an aesthetic of everydayness. It could be inferred that if the securitization of migrants occurs through their being linked to threats in newspaper commentary, as Huysmans argues is the case (1995:60), then the same medium could be used to link migrants to other identities as prescribed by his strategy of identity fragmentation. Here the kind of 'story teller' responsible for developing alternative narratives of migrants is the purview of the media

columnist. This offers one example of a potential agent, but it is only based on an inference. Looking beyond this the onus is upon Huysmans to be more explicit about how to transform his abstract theory into a form of political practice, and this involves identifying who can (and to some degree who cannot) engage in a such a strategy. Who can speak authoritatively about the role of migrants in a society and establish new discursive links that will separate migrants from the monolithic identity of the dangerous 'other'?

Huysmans' strategy of desecuritization is much clearer in describing the specific discursive strategy to be employed. This strategy can be summarized in terms of two moves. The first move is to draw out the differences that exist *between* migrants in a discussion that collapses the universal category of 'the migrant'. In challenging the possibility of a clear and coherent category of 'the migrant', the strategy inhibits the totalizing view of migrants which exclusionary practices rely upon. The emphasis on differences between migrants is also useful because it draws out characteristics that natives can relate to (i.e. some migrants are parents, so are some natives), rather than viewing migrants as wholly alien. In practical terms this can be accomplished by discussing migrants in discrete particular terms that elude universalization (i.e. migrants as doctors, as labourers, as women, etc.). The second move is to speak from the subjugated positions that migrants often occupy. Here the example of the common trope of the highly trained Doctor migrating to the West where they end up driving a taxicab is a useful example. The way this trope often plays out is that a foreign born and trained Doctor has aspirations to join a western community and practice medicine, something that is seen as badly needed in the west, but is prohibited by a glacial and prohibitive licensing process which condemn them to a menial profession. Stories of this sort highlight how practices of exclusion,

namely a prohibitive licensing process in this instance, prevent migrants from legitimate activities in a community.

Huysmans' later discussion an 'aesthetic of everydayness' brings one further element into this discursive strategy. The focus on establishing a society's relationship to migrants in terms of an 'aesthetic' emphasizes that the discussion about migrant should not just be a matter of rational contestation (i.e. the evidence shows not all migrants are the same), but shifting society's *sensibilities* towards migrants at an emotional level. In Huysmans view there has to be something in the strategy of securitization that replaces the emotional vitalism produced through the aesthetic horror. This is accomplished by empathizing with migrants and expressing solidarity with them in their struggles that are relatable to us (1998:588). The crux of this discursive strategy then relies on replacing our affective relationship towards migrants with emotions other than fear.

Finally, because Huysmans is unclear as to who the deconstructivist agent might be, any potential comparison to other agents of is problematic. Without a clear point of reference it is impossible to discuss why Huysmans' agent, whoever that might be, is well positioned to desecuritize migration.

This leaves a mixed impression of Huysmans' aesthetic of everydayness. While possessing a (comparatively) robust discursive strategy, failure to identify any potential candidate to engage in this process makes it difficult to envision as a viable form of practice. This becomes even more evident as we imagine the deconstructivist strategy playing out in a mental simulation. Following Huysmans' focus on the securitization of migrants, let us imagine a scenario where migrants are discursively linked to some notion of threat (i.e. drug trafficking). This could occur in popular media, even on the newspaper opinion pages as Huysmans suggests

(1995:60). Let us assume some reflective agents, perhaps another columnist, an academic, NGO, or even politician recognizes the article and its attempt to securitize migrants, and engages in a deconstructivist strategy, one that bares some resemblances to Huysmans' aesthetic of everydayness.

The problem with this approach is that it neglects what might be called the political economy of securitization. This is the dynamic that occurs when the logic of security becomes entangled with commercial and economic logics. As Williams argues:

“[securitization research] must also account for the ways in which these [speech] acts are mediated through communications institutions (“the media”) that are organizationally distinct from the site of securitization, that are bound up with competing logics (commercialization, market share, audience attraction), and yet that are central to the securitizing act.” (Williams, 2003:528)

News sells when it is exciting, and the urgency and danger associated with threats make it far more likely that mass media's commercial interests will focus on that kind of discussion. In contrast, articles expressing the mundane life of migrants in an attempt to make them more relatable are not likely meet mass media's intention of attracting an audience. This does not suggest that the economy of mass media is structured to portray migrants as threatening. Popular portrayals of migrant success stories (i.e. entrepreneurship) are one possible alternative. Rather, it is to say that such a strategy of desecuritization faces an uphill battle. The narrative of cosmic struggle against an implacable foe that is perpetuated by the aesthetic of horror has a certain commercial appeal, one that the aesthetic of everydayness and its narrative of the mundane fails to capture. This problem makes an enduring skepticism over the deconstructivist position warranted.

Williams and the Ethic of Argumentation

Contrary to other approaches which utilize resources outside of securitization theory to develop an ethical framework, Williams argues a deeper interrogation of securitization theory demonstrates a distinct ethical position within itself. This claim is made by tracing securitization theory's lineage back to the influence of classical political realism and its engagement with Carl Schmitt. While the Copenhagen School's focus on the social constitution of security through speech-acts is informed by Constructivist work during the 1990s, Williams recognizes that the specific nature of securitization as a *security* speech-act defined by the notion of existential threat, has a much longer lineage (2003:514). To draw out this history Williams explores the interplay between Schmitt's concept of the political and his decisionist theory of sovereignty.

For Schmitt, the political, or the political sphere as it is sometimes called, cannot be determined by its substantive content.²¹ Rather, it is defined by the “particularly *intense* relationship that actors feel toward it”, which is fostered through the development of the friend-enemy antagonism (emphasis in original, Williams quoting Schmitt, 2003:515). Like the Copenhagen School's concept of security, the political is determined through a social process. The friend-enemy antagonism establishes the basis of political order for Schmitt, as it is the most intense and authentic manner of grouping; no sense of political community compares to that which is defined by opposition to an enemy. When this antagonism reaches its apex, and the possibility of mortal conflict is imminent, the political order has entered a state of emergency. For the political grouping to survive it must suspend all normal political procedure and enter a state of exception. This is where the Schmitt's theory of a decisionist sovereign comes into play. In the words of Schmitt, the “Sovereign is he who decides upon the exception” (Williams

²¹ As opposed to say the economic sphere which is substantively defined by the distribution of resources, or the religious sphere which is defined by one's relationship to God.

quoting Schmitt, 2003:516). It is the Sovereign's role, supported by the allegiance and solidarity of the 'friend' grouping, to decide on when the point of exception has been reached and the normal rules that characterize the political order (i.e. due process, parliamentary procedure, separation of powers, etc.) are suspended.

Yet by deciding upon the point of exception, the Sovereign is also demarcating what is normal for the political order. For Schmitt the concept of an entirely rules based political order, such as liberal democracy, is an impossibility as all rules must originate from previous rules, and so on. At some point the capacity for decision must stand outside of the political order itself. In this sense, the Sovereign's capacity for decision constitutes both the exceptional and the normal. The concept of the political and the decisionist theory of sovereignty is mutually supportive at this point. A 'friend' grouping must exist and support the capacity to decide, but it is the Sovereign that is required to decide on when to suspend the normal political order to ensure survival of the group in its existential conflict with the enemy (2003:517).

It is the dynamic of breaking free from the rules to ensure group survivability that the Copenhagen School inherits from Schmitt, and what sets it apart from other constructivist approaches. The key point of interest here for Williams is the notion of *decision*. Security speech acts are explicit political *decisions* intended to suspend the political order and legitimize extraordinary action. But as Schmitt's view of the Sovereign indicates, these actions are ultimately arbitrary. In Schmitt's words "[the] precise details of an emergency cannot be anticipated" and it is therefore impossible to determine what rules would be applicable to it in advance (Ibid). It is because the act of decision exists beyond any political, juridical, ethical, or any other rule-based framework, it operates without hindrance and is the pinnacle of ultimate, arbitrary political authority.

To his credit Williams is cautious in his approach at this point. Recognizing that too much focus on the “search for singular and distinct acts of securitization might well lead one to misperceive processes through which a situation is being gradually intensified,” which “can obscure the broader underlying processes that make the securitization dynamic possible” (2003:521). Nevertheless, a focus on the speech act informs us as to the location of an arbitrary and ultimately contestable decision that seeks *legitimation*.

Understanding the security speech-act as seeking legitimation returns us to a constructivist understanding of security, one that is open to discursive contestation, and subsequently a form of discursive ethics. Discursive ethics is premised on the Habermasian notion of communicative rationality, the belief that best possible ethical precepts are reasoned out in dialogue with other parties. Exposing one’s reason to the scrutiny of others is the ultimate test in resiliency. The participants in this exchange must recognize the potential for others to find flaws in their own argument, and keep an open mind as to the possibility of altering one’s position. The conclusions reached in this exchange are the most universalizable as they are produced in a manner that provides the most potential for contestation. To prevent Schmittian decisionism, security speech-acts must be defended in reasoned argumentation. The ethical action in the face of securitization is to argue: hence the ethics of argumentation.

The difficulty in making an evaluation of agency in Williams’ approach is that is distinctly abstract, with little consideration as to how these practices may play out empirically. Instead, he substitutes the work of Thomas Risse (2000) on communicative action in world politics as a proxy for how such practices of argumentation might play out in practice. To evaluate the practicality of William’s discursive ethics, we must then turn to Risse who provides a more empirical grounding.

Risse argues that in addition to rationalist strategic behaviour and constructivist rule-guided behaviour, both which currently co-dominate understandings of world politics, there is a distinct form of behaviour to be found in the practice of argumentation. Working from Habermas' view of communicative action, arguing occurs when "actors engage in truth seeking with the aim of reaching a mutual understanding based on a reasoned consensus and challenging the validity claims involved in any communication" (2000:1). While communication is ubiquitous in world politics not all of it is truly argumentative; for example, communicating one's preferences in a strategic bargaining scenario does not fit this definition (2000:8). However, arguing frequently does occur, and on a significant scale as evidenced by the example of the major shift seen in President Mikhail Gorbachev's views over German unification within NATO during the 1989-1990 negotiations to end the Cold War (2000:23).

What can we derive from Risse's discussion to inform our own understanding of the agency in Williams' ethics of argumentation? For Risse, argumentation is more likely to be successful if it corresponds to the model of an ideal speech situation, a set of criteria devised by Habermas to layout the preconditions for successful communicative action. The ideal speech situation is defined by three characteristics: first, agents need to be able to empathize with others and be able to see the world through their partner's eyes; second, there needs to be a common life world, meaning a collective supply mutual knowledge and interpretations about the world; and third, the discourse needs to be absent relationships of power and open to the public. The key point to recognize here is that while the ideal speech situation is an 'ideal type', a counterfactual, the preconditions for communicative action can be relaxed to some extent while still maintaining the truth-seeking behaviour inherent to arguing (Risse, 2000:19).²²

²² Although Risse is unclear as to what extent these preconditions can be relaxed.

From this criteria that we can derive a sharper picture of the agency involved in the ethic of argumentation. Whoever contests the securitization must be in position to empathize and share a common life world with the securitizer. Agents intervening in the securitization process will not be in a position to argue the claims of the securitizer if they are seen as too alien or unable to empathize with their claims. We could see this condition not being met when states from disparate geopolitical backgrounds and historical experiences engage in dialogue. For example, Norway may not be in a strong position to argue the security claims of Angola, because a) the relative stability of residing in the Nordic community may prohibit Norway from empathizing with the less stable environment of South-West Africa, and b) a lack of 'dense interactions' between the two states, as Risse puts it (2000:15), may prohibit the development of a collective reservoir of common knowledge and interpretations about the world-making dialogue difficult. In this respect, who the specific agent to intervene in the securitization process should be is dependent on familiarity and similarity with the securitizing agent.

Adherence to the ideal speech situation promotes a very clear discursive strategy for the agent engaging in the intervention: argumentative rationality. Eschewing all notions of coercion and less genuine rhetorical appeals, argumentative rationality is intended to test the validity of the claims of the securitizer in a dialogue. Risse notes that the validity here refers to three kinds of claims: factual claims, normative claims, and authenticity claims (2000:9). In terms of argumentative ethics and securitization this proposes three distinct discursive challenges: does threat you have defined really have the ability to commit the harm you predict (i.e. does the enemy you identify actually possess the missiles, tanks, bombs, planes, etc. to threaten anyone?); is a security response the right thing to do in this situation (i.e. is military intervention the right course of action here or is a political solution more appropriate?); and finally, does the

securitizing agent here have honest intentions (i.e. are you treating this issue as a threat to secure more resources or support for your organization?). This discursive strategy allows the intervening agent to challenge the securitizer on multiple fronts, each of which scrutinizes the integrity of their position.

Lastly, something about the relative position of the desecuritizing agent can be inferred from the third quality of the ideal speech situation, that there is no coercion and that the discourse be open to the public. Risse acknowledges that in world politics ever present power relations often prohibit genuine argumentation; power relations can define who has legitimate access to a discourse, as well as affecting what might count as a 'good argument' with weaker powers having to expend greater effort to develop support for their views (Risse, 2000:16). Despite these frequent barriers, arguing can still occur, as long as a condition of 'nonhierarchy' exists, meaning that positioning in power relations does not determine what constitutes a 'good argument'. In this respect, agents intervening in the securitization process are more likely to succeed in contesting securitization moves if they are engaged in venues where they are viewed as equal in status. Thus, Risse notes that there obvious differences in power between permanent and non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, but as long the arguments between different types of members are afforded equal weight conditions for genuine argumentation are met (2000:18).

So far there appears to be a robust conceptualization of agency contained within Williams' argumentative ethics, albeit somewhat implicitly. How then, might this play out in a practical instance of desecuritization? In terms of mental simulation, the generality of Williams' framework makes it amenable to a wide variety of different contexts, so it is best to choose a widely accessible example. Here, I focus on the February 6th, 2003, presentation in the United

Nations Security Council by American Secretary of State Colin Powell regarding Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction. Seen as an effort to paint Iraq's weapons program as an existential threat and in turn legitimize the use of force against the Iraqi state, Powell's presentation can be read as a securitizing speech-act (O'Reilly, 2008:71), the kind envisioned by Williams' argumentative ethics. The venue arguably contains the criteria of an ideal speech situation, so much so that Risse uses the Security Council as an example of a potential site for truth seeking behaviour (2000:18). The broader institutional setting of the United Nations can be seen as a source of continual 'dense interactions' which constitute the shared knowledge that allows for a common life world. While power relationships always exist in the background, the procedural setting of the Security Council ensures a certain egalitarian role to each speaker, even despite the differentiated power of permanent members. Finally, the condition of shared empathy is a more difficult claim to substantiate, however it could be argued that Council members empathized with the United States' efforts to disarm Iraq of dangerous chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons.

The historical record shows reactions to Powell's presentation from Security Council members were mixed. Already established allies of the United States such as the United Kingdom and Spain were supportive of the presentation. But the majority of states, with France and Germany leading the opposition, requested more time for the UN weapons inspectors to investigate before agreeing to further resolutions against Iraq (Glennon, 2003:17).

It could be argued the Security Council discussion of the presentation itself demonstrates the failure of truth-seeking behaviour in the context of security issues. No members experienced a serious shift in their position in the aftermath of the presentation. However, to be fair to potential advocates of an argumentative ethics, it could be noted that the argumentative claims of

opposing member states were quite narrow. For example, French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin emphasized that “the key factor... are the inspectors” (Frost, 2003). Here the point of contestation was a narrow set of empirical claims, whose ultimate resolution lay outside of the Security Council members’ dialogue and with the UN weapons inspectors. This would have then been an ideal speech situation with an anemic attempt at arguing.

A more robust attempt at argumentation would not just challenge empirical validity, but normative (is military force morally justified?) and authentic validity (is the United States being truthful in its claims?) as well. This would truly constitute a move towards an argumentative ethics. But what if this were the case? What if representatives from France and Germany (and perhaps China and Russia as well), engaged in a robust argumentative challenge to Colin Powell’s claims, contesting not only a narrow set of empirical facts, but the normative claims and the authenticity of the speaker? At first reaction, a major diplomatic row would have occurred because such as contestation would be tantamount to impugning the honesty of the United States’ representatives. But would this strategy have substantially changed the outcome in the first place? Could forcing the United States and its allies to justify itself on the basis of these challenges have changed the end result?

I would suggest that a strategy of discursive argumentation, challenging the full spectrum of claims made by the securitizing agent, would be ineffective in this instance. To understand this position, one has to reassess the basis of how argumentative dialogue occurs. When the United States Government engaged the Security Council it did not have the intention of engaging in truth-seeking behaviour, meaning entering the dialogue with an open mind and willingness to change its position. Instead, President Bush openly acknowledged even before engaging with the UN that the United States would proceed with or without UN approval (Glennon, 2003:17).

The reason for this is that openness to debate and contestation is highly unlikely in a heavily securitized scenario.²³ The presence of an existential threat does not allow for deliberative argumentation because an existential threat is largely defined by its urgency, ““because if the problem is not handled now it will be too late, and we will not exist to remedy the future”” (Buzan *et al*, 1998:26). In the lead up the 2003 Iraq War the Bush administration felt the contestation of the empirical details were beside the point when faced with an existential threat. Or as National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice put it: "there will always be some uncertainty about how quickly [Saddam Hussein] can acquire nuclear weapons. But we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud." (Wolf Blitzer, 2003)

Ironically, an argumentative ethics based on rational deliberation intends to institute the same rules based framework that securitization moves so often successfully overcome. Even if an argumentative ethics became extremely popular in the policy world, and the challenging of validity claims became institutionalized in the state security apparatus, how then would such an ethics contend with the decision to supercede all rules-based frameworks and enter a state of exception?

Aradau and the Emancipatory Politics of Desecuritization

Claudia Aradau has been an intense critic of the Copenhagen School, calling the concept of desecuritization “seriously underspecified”, as well as lamenting the continuing “indecisiveness concerning the desirability of desecuritization” (2004a:389). Like Williams, Aradau’s reading of securitization theory is deeply influenced by Carl Schmitt and the notions of existential threat and political orders based around the friend-enemy antagonism. The key point

²³ It is important to recognize that ‘security’ issues are indeed debated and deliberated upon on daily political life. The everyday discussions of the Security Council are example of this. But for something to be properly securitized, in the Copenhagen sense, it must be associated with urgency a commitment to exceptional resources or policies must be produced. Disagreement over the passage of new resolutions is indicative of a failed securitization move amongst members.

of departure however, is her dichotomous reading of the choice between desecuritization and securitization as a choice between “the democratic politics of universal norms and slow procedures or the exceptional politics of speed and enemy exclusion” (388). Aradau frames the issue of desecuritization as an explicitly “ethical-political choice which refuses to let democratic politics slip into exceptional politics” (393). This establishes a position that is categorically against the politics of security, where the *only* morally acceptable course of action is desecuritization.²⁴ Her 2004 article offers an explicit strategy for desecuritization based on what she calls the ‘politics of emancipation’.

While emancipation is a common theme in Critical Security Studies, especially in what has come to be termed the Welsh School, the concept Aradau has in mind is substantially different. Emancipation in the context of the Welsh School “means freeing people, as individuals and groups, from the social, physical, economic, political, and other constraints that stop them from carrying out what they would freely choose to do, of which war, poverty, oppression, and poor education are a few.” (Aradau quoting Booth, 2004a:397) In this formulation security equals emancipation. However, the tendency to equivocate security with emancipation is particularly troubling for Aradau as such definitions don’t work against the logic of security, they merely reproduce it.

To illustrate this position Aradau returns to a Schmittian reading of the logic of security, where the securitization process is highly dependent on establishing relations enmity and exclusion (399). For some particular referent to feel threatened, there must an ‘other’ who is the source of the threat. History is filled with threatened-threatener tropes: the Free World is

²⁴ One could easily question this dichotomous reading of security politics as it fails to engage with counter arguments that attempt to establish a middle ground, such as arguments focused around invoking security with the purpose of saving democratic politics (i.e. unprecedented executive measures in parliamentary democracies). However, such a critique is outside the purpose of this chapter.

threatened by the Communist Bloc, the neighborhood is threatened by criminal elements; the social services of taxpaying citizens are threatened by illegal immigrants, and so on. The concepts of the threatened and the threatener are mutually constitutive, you cannot have one without the other.

When the Welsh School attempts to change the referential focus of security to emancipating oppressed and endangered groups, rather than say protecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states, it is only shifting around the referential subject of security. This move never truly escapes the logic of security, because viewing these groups as threatened requires the creation of a new dangerous ‘other’, whose security is in turn threatened. Paradoxically, shifting the referential focus of security among groups creates new ‘insecurities’ as someone always has to take the role of the dangerous other. Thus, for example, the securitizing of the trafficking of women relies on establishing illegal migrant groups and prostitutes as threatening, which in turn makes these groups insecure (399). Any notion of emancipation that is reliant on the logic of security simply reproduces its exclusionary practices. Emancipation must undercut the logic of security itself.

Drawing upon post-Marxist philosophers Étienne Balibar and Jacques Rancière, Aradau employs a view of emancipation that operates in direct opposition to the exclusionary drive the logic of security. In Aradau’s view, if one can suspend the exclusionary practice upon which the process of securitization depends, the logic of security can be negated and democratic politics can be reinstated (401). In practical terms this is achieved by having the excluded groups impose a “rational obligation upon the others to recognize them” (Aradau quoting Rancière, 402). Recognition here is argued for discursively on the basis of already established universal citizenship-type ideals, a tactic long employed in emancipatory movements. For example, the

right of women to vote is cast as a demand for recognition against the ideal of universal suffrage. Demanding the recognition of women as equal citizens is based upon the existing, but not wholly realized universal ideal of equal citizenship. Similarly for security, excluded and dangerous groups should demand to be recognized as party to an existing universal ideal. Migrant labourers should argue for recognition not as threatening and subversive, but as workers with *rights*. Muslims not as potential terrorists, but as equal *citizens*. This is a discursive strategy intended to target the hypocrisy²⁵ of viewing certain groups in particularist terms that allow them to be seen as threatening. Demands for universal recognition destabilize the assigned identity of dangerous 'other' and puts these groups *outside* the logic of security. This deprives the process of securitization of its central driving force: a dangerous other. The absence of any group operating as a clear and present danger collapses the exceptional politics of security. Finally, the recognition of such groups according to universal citizenship-type ideals (whether it be rights, nationality, humanity, etc.) affords them a kind of procedural consideration that is the realm of slow, democratic politics.

Aradau's approach relies on robust conception of agency for intervening in the securitization process. Following Balibar, Aradau's argues that "no one can be emancipated by an external decision" (402). It is the groups who are targeted by the exclusionary practices of security, and identified as the dangerous 'other', that are charged with intervening in the securitization process. There is however, a significant contradiction in this argument. Aradau recognizes that dangerous 'others' are often not viewed as legitimate discussion partners, yet the only way the excluded group can shed the identity of 'dangerous' is in a rational discussion demanding recognition on the basis of an alternative identity (citizen, human, worker, etc.). The

²⁵ This is a particularly interesting point given Constructivists focus on the use of hypocrisy in moral arguments in world politics (Price, 2008).

crux of the problem is that the particular agent Aradau believes is best positioned to intervene in the securitization process cannot speak to it because dangerous ‘others’ are not legitimate discussion partners.

The discursive strategy of arguing for recognition of the basis of pre-established universal ideals is particularly strong. Two clear advantages of this approach are worth noting. First, by drawing upon the history of civil rights and other emancipatory movements, Aradau establishes an empirical basis to justify the tactic of arguing for the recognition of a universal ideal. From women’s suffrage to the American civil rights movement, claims for emancipation are historically made in terms of recognizing some group as part of an already established universal ideal. Second, Aradau identifies the sources of these universals in already existing and well accepted institutions such as “constitutional principles (equality before the law, fundamental rights), general legal principles (due process, proportionality), national jurisprudence and law.” (403) The argument for recognition already exist in these principles, they only need to be extended to a particular situation.²⁶ The combination of empirical grounding and the reference to pre-existing resources for other groups to engage in emancipatory struggle culminates in particularly potent discursive strategy.

Lastly, there is the important consideration of why the dangerous and excluded ‘other’ is particularly well placed, in comparison to other potential agents, to intervene in the securitization process. Aradau is muted on this specific question, but something can be inferred from the proposition that people cannot be emancipated by “external decision”. It could be argued that a unique moral authority is invoked when the call for recognition comes from within the excluded

²⁶ Aradau’s formulation here exposes a bias towards focusing on excluded groups existing *within* the state. With groups outside the state deemed as ‘dangerous’ (i.e. states, ethnic groups, tribes, religious groups), it could be considered more difficult given the lack of universal-type citizenship ideals at the global level. Nonetheless, these groups could make appeals to existing resources in international politics, principally sovereignty, to be recognized as something other than ‘dangerous’.

group itself. The very act of an individual speaking from beyond the margins of a supposedly universal community is an affirmation that the community is not as inclusive as previously believed. Speaking from outside the community exposes what Aradau refers to as “fictive universality”, or how the universality of the community is imagined, but not truly achieved (403). Thus, agents speaking from outside the established community are particularly well-endowed to expose the contradiction between the inclusive universal ideal of community and the practices of exclusion that are inherent in the process of securitization.

From this analysis it would seem that Aradau’s emancipatory ethics offers a particularly robust view of agency. Aside from the initial dilemma of how to get dangerous ‘others’ to speak to the securitizing agent and their audience, Aradau’s notion of agency seems plausible and thus ripe for consideration in mental simulation. In line with Aradau’s Schmittian reading of securitization, such a simulation should focus on the exclusionary practices of securitization.

Imagine then a particular ethnic/religious/national group ‘X’ as the target the of recent securitization moves in a western state ‘Y’. The premise of such a securitization could be that members of group X were involved in, or accused, some activity that was adverse to Y’s interests (perhaps terrorism, narcotics, human smuggling, fraud, etc.). Actors within Y partake in a series of discursive moves framing X as a dangerous other. According to Aradau, actors within group X should engage in discursive strategy that claims memberships to the universal ideals of community that define group Y, thus including themselves in group Y.

There is a significant problem here that Aradau’s approach does not consider, namely the potential for the narrowing of the universal principles that define the boundaries of group Y. Historically, notions of citizenship have been altered to keep out the dangerous other and deny claims to recognition. The Government of the United States of America’s 1942 interment

decision for its Japanese populace in the wake the Pearl Harbor attack is a striking example. Following the attack, President Franklin Delanor Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 which led to the internment of almost 120,000 Japanese American citizens and Japanese aliens based on the suspicion that those of Japanese ancestry may participate in espionage and sabotage against the American war effort (Kashima, 2003:4). Although appeals were made to recognize the rights of some of the interned as American citizens and therefore not subject to unreasonable detention, the Supreme Court of United States upheld the legality of the executive order (*Korematsu v. United States*). The universal ideal of American citizenship was narrowed to exclude what was ostensibly recognized as the dangerous ‘other’, individuals of Japanese ancestry, in the name of security. Even appeals to the very resources that Aradau would argue establish the universal character of American citizenship, “constitutional principles (equality before the law, fundamental rights), general legal principles (due process, proportionality), national jurisprudence and law”, were not effective in establishing recognition for the excluded group. The example of Japanese American interment is not an isolated instance (the Canadian government engaged in a similar program), and the phenomenon is observable over time. Even today, with the benefit of hindsight similar attempts at narrowing the universal ideal of citizenship on the basis of a dangerous ‘other’ are ubiquitous in politics. For example, Speaker of the House John Boehner has recently expressed support for considering the repeal of the 16th Amendment of the United States Constitution guaranteeing citizenship for anyone born in the United States(Gregory, 2010). Under the auspices of combating illegal immigration and so-called ‘anchor babies’, this move would effectively narrow American citizenship and make appeals by the children of illegal immigrants for recognition as American citizens impossible.

This argument highlights Aradau's failure to consider countermoves to her historically based strategy of emancipation. This is not to completely discount Aradau's approach to desecuritization. Incidences like the Japanese American internment are relatively rare, at least in liberal democratic societies. More generally, the suspension of the legal and institutional resources (i.e. constitutional law) which establish such universality are rare as well. Yet it is precisely these legal and institutional resources (which coincidentally define the procedural substance of democratic politics) which are subject to abridgement by the exceptional politics of security. Indeed, one might say that the very resources that fuel Aradau's emancipatory strategy of desecuritization exist outside the politics of security, wherein exception and urgency reigns. When Fred Korematsu, an American citizen of Japanese descent, petitioned the United States Supreme Court regarding his interment in 1944, he abruptly found the traditional protections of his citizenship were outside his reach. This analysis therefore does not reject Aradau's emancipatory strategy out of hand, but recognizes clear hurdles in its implementation.

Floyd and the Consequentialist Evaluation of Security

Rita Floyd's ethics of securitization is premised upon a synthesis of the Copenhagen and Welsh Schools of Critical Security Studies. For Floyd, both schools are marked by a fundamental normative bias in their views of security. While sympathetic to the Copenhagen School, especially the analysis of security as a speech act, Floyd is critical of what she sees as an overly pessimistic view of the process of securitization within the School. This is typified by Wæver's belief that "security should be seen as a negative, as a failure to deal with issues of normal politics" (Floyd quoting Wæver, 2007:330). In this view the politics of security are normatively undesirable because they are often implicated in undemocratic and authoritarian

practices (Buzan et al, 1998:29).²⁷ In contrast Floyd identifies the Welsh School, and its equivocation of security with emancipation as overly optimistic. In this perspective, the concept of security has an instrumental value as a means to save oppressed groups, something that is normatively desirable.

To fully grasp this synthesis some explanation of the Welsh School is in order. Like the Copenhagen School, the Welsh School sees security as a form of practice and is critical of conventional explanations of security as rooted in the territory and sovereignty of the state. The difference is that Welsh theorists, principally Richard Wyn Jones and Ken Booth in Floyd's view, argue for a particular normative end for security: emancipation. Following the Frankfurt Critical Theory tradition of emancipating oneself from false consciousness, the Welsh School looks beyond the dominant theories of state centric realism to envision new ways of political ordering. One key way of doing this is decoupling the concept of security from the state system, which is inherently insecure in their view, and attaching it to the concept of emancipation which targets endangered and impoverished people. Following Floyd, it is worth citing Booth in the original:

“Emancipation is freeing people (as individuals and groups) from the physical and human constraints, together with poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on. *Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin.* Emancipation, not power or order, produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security.” (Floyd quoting Booth, 2007:332 emphasis Floyd's)

In this sense emancipation does not have a definite character, but is rather premised on the particular conditions experienced by a people at a given time. The specific unit being protected here is indeterminate; emancipating oppressed peoples could mean intervening on behalf of a small religious minority facing violent state discrimination (i.e. the Falun Gong in China), or it

²⁷ Not all securitization theorists would agree with this view. For example, Aradau would argue that the Copenhagen School's normative position remains frustratingly ambiguous (2004:389).

could refer to larger collectivities that span across geopolitical regions whose survival is imperiled by a recent natural disaster (i.e. South-East Asia in the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami). This indeterminacy is useful because it allows for a generalization to different contexts, but it is also a weakness as it fails to set any limits on the emancipatory logic of security. When, precisely do we know we have met the basic human needs that qualify as emancipation (Floyd, 2007:333)? Despite the limitations of the approach, the Welsh School provides an overtly optimistic view of security, premised on helping human beings at their most vulnerable.

While Floyd goes to length to list the commonalities between the two schools, the key point of convergence is in viewing security as being about the mobilization of power (Floyd, 2007:343). Applying the label of ‘security’ to something is a way vault that issue to the centre of attention of policy makers and political elites and ensure that it receives the resources it requires, whether that is emergency funding, conscription, martial law, special police powers, etc. While the Copenhagen School argues that this is not without consequence, the Welsh School argues that such a move may be just what is necessary to ensure the survival of others. Floyd opts for a middle-ground position between these two perspectives. In this position we should reserve judgment on any particular securitization or desecuritization until we consider its consequence as either a positive or negative development. Thus, before passing judgment we should decide whether or not the results of any given security move have ‘good’ or ‘bad’ consequences.

A positive securitization can be defined as “intense political solution that within the margins of moral rightness, and preferably based upon the political interest of the majority, benefits a security problem... and deals with it faster, better and more efficiently than a normal politicization does, offering a just and useful alternative” (Floyd, 2007:342). If some political

issue can be resolved in an expedited manner, and is within the interests of the majority, then that securitization move is morally justified. Similarly, a positive desecuritization occurs when some political issue remains unresolved or intractable as a security issue, and drops down to the level of political contestation, but at the same time is not depoliticized to drop off the political agenda altogether (Floyd, 2007:343). If an issue can be resolved through a political negotiation and cooperation, rather than within the framework of security, then desecuritization can be said to be normatively desirable. These represent ‘positive’ security moves.

Negative security moves represent the diametric opposite of these goals. A negative securitization only benefits a few, most often a self-interested securitizing actor who is seeking more resources or authority (i.e. a president seeking special powers), and fails to resolve the underlying problem from which insecurity is derived (Ibid). This reflects the influence of the Copenhagen School’s concerns that securitization may lead to authoritarian and undemocratic politics. Finally, while Floyd is less specific with what a negative desecuritization entails, it is articulated as the depoliticization of an issue to such an extent that it falls off the political agenda altogether, although an example of such issue is difficult to fathom.

Thus, Floyd draws upon the long tradition in moral philosophy where the moral rightness of an act is determined by weighing its consequences, as opposed to say deontologists who focus on rights, or some form of virtue ethics (Floyd, 2007:339). Securitization and desecuritization are both morally acceptable possibilities, based upon whether or not they yield positive or negative *consequences*. The consequences of a given securitization are determined by the security analyst. Like the theoretical frameworks of the Copenhagen and Welsh Schools, this provides a normative framework that is indeterminate. Therefore, it can be applied to a wide variety of contexts ranging from the supranational to within the state.

Within this approach there is an explicit, yet minimalist view of agency. Floyd is very clear that the specific agent she has in mind to make this evaluation and subsequent intervention is the security analyst themselves. But what is meant by ‘security analyst’ in this context? While initially lacking definition, this broad category is narrowed when it is positioned as a response to Jef Huysman’s normative dilemma of writing and speaking security. Recall the dilemma as the problem analysts face when discussing issues of security whereby the act of discussing it reinforces the discursive links that frame it as a security issue in the first place. In Floyd’s view, the normative dilemma can be transgressed by equipping the analyst with a normative framework, in this case a consequentialist ethics, to critically evaluate securitizing moves (2007:337). By articulating a consequentialist ethics as a response to the normative dilemma of writing security, Floyd is targeting security analysts whose work possesses ‘a particular self-reflexivity, or in other words those who engage in what we call Critical Security Studies. Analysts from conventional security studies (read neorealism) would not necessarily be concerned with the normative dilemma of writing security, due to the absence of the self-reflexivity that would have them consider the normative implications of their work in the first place. The meaning of ‘security analyst’ in Floyd’s scenario is therefore narrowed to the ‘*critical* security analyst’, the particular kind of academic that would be likely to read Floyd’s work and engage with it.

Any clear discursive strategy is conspicuously absent from this approach. In Floyd’s words the analyst’s role is “to step into the security equation and on behalf of the actors encourage some securitisations and renounce others, depending on the moral rightness of the respective securitisation’s consequences.” (2007:339) The analyst is to ‘enlighten’ the securitizing actor, and presumably the audience as well, as to what the best possible course of

action is. Putting aside the difficulties of knowing the ‘best possible course of action’ based upon an evaluation of the consequences of a particular security move²⁸, this position is emblematic of why scrutiny of the practicality of securitization ethics is vitally important. What reason do we have to believe that an endorsement or condemnation from security analysts would alter the trajectory of a securitizing speech act? While Floyd’s consequentialism may inform us as to the normative desirability of a particular security move, it does nothing to help us understand how the analyst will intervene to either promote or impede it. Ironically, while Floyd makes it clear that analytically her sympathies lie with the Copenhagen School, and that in her reading the “main argument of securitisation theory is that security is a (illocutionary) speech act” (328), she has no clear view of how security analysts will speak to the securitization process *itself*.

Floyd’s account of why the security analyst is in a comparatively better position to intervene in the securitization process (as opposed to other actors) is equally problematic. Floyd’s argument here relies on the Welsh School’s view of the critical intellectual as a self-reflective agent who aims to free others from ‘false consciousness’ (333). The ‘critical’ security analyst is in a privileged position to engage in these kinds of interventions because they are privy to a kind of special knowledge that can free others from their own ignorance. The problem with this argument is that it is entirely divorced from the empirical examples Floyd uses to contextualize positive and negative instances of securitization and desecuritization. Of the four environmental policy scenarios Floyd considers none have any reference to the role of the security analyst. For example, when Floyd cites the Brazilian Government’s decision to

²⁸ While there are obvious problems with how a security analyst can reasonably ascertain the consequences of a particular securitizing move, the evaluation employed here is less about the particular conception of moral goodness, and more so about how that end will be achieved. Criticism of how the analyst evaluates consequences is outside the purview of the examination being done here.

integrate environmental concerns into its National Security Strategy, a move which is attributed to reversing destructive deforestation policies towards the Amazonian Rainforest, there is no mention of the role of the security analyst. While Floyd's examples from environmental policy arguably highlight desirable and undesirable security moves, they are absent any mention of an emancipatory agent liberating securitizing actors and their audiences from false consciousness. For Floyd's consequentialist ethics to constitute a viable practice it must show how the critical security analyst influenced the securitization process in these empirical examples.

At this point it may seem redundant to engage in a counter-factual mental simulation given the failure of Floyd's approach to establish 1) a clear discursive strategy and 2) a justification of why the critical security analyst is particularly well positioned to intervene in the speech act. However, such an exercise can also expose problems with viewing critical security analysts as intervening agents. First, let us acknowledge that Floyd states a consequentialist ethics should not be limited to governing securitizations in the environmental sector (340). This leaves our mental simulation open to a wide range of contexts, so it is best to adopt one that is eminently familiar. Here I focus on the 2003 debate leading up to the Iraq War. While the Iraq War is often taken as an instance of securitization (Hughes, 2007; Möller, 2007; O'Reilly, 2007; Roe, 2008; Stahl, 2007), Brian C. Schmidt and Michael C. Williams (2008) cast the 2003 American prewar debate as a contest between the well-established realist tradition and the rise of neo-conservatism. This kind of debate easily maps out onto the model of agency suggested by Floyd.

In September, 2002, a group of prominent realists took out a paid advertisement in the *New York Times* where they contested the rationale for viewing Iraq as a security threat warranting preventative war ("War with Iraq is not in America's National Interest", 2002). This

can be read as a group of security analysts discouraging a negative securitization, defined as a move that would fail to resolve the underlying issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. By invoking a particular understanding of the 'national interest', prominent realist scholars could be viewed as working to emancipate policy makers from their 'false consciousness'. The problem is this act of discouragement and other realist critiques along with it failed to alter the securitization process. For Schmidt and Williams one of the key reasons realists failed was due to the ways in which neo-conservatives configured debate and employed certain rhetorical, ideological, and political strategies (2008:210). Of particular importance were the ways in which neoconservatives attacked the realist notion of national interest as limited to narrow egotistical self-interest, and in turn substituted a rich values-based notion of their own (2008:214). The neoconservative notion of the national interest as rooted in American exceptionalism and democracy promotion drew upon powerful undercurrents in the 'culture wars' that define the American political landscape, where emphasis on American greatness and its moral mission to spread democracy are positioned as an alternative to the stifling rationalism of foreign policy academic elites (2008:218-219).

William's and Schmitt's conclusions reminds us of the fact that securitizing agents bring their own discursive strategies to the table, and that these may be more effective than anything dissenting analysts may bring to bear. The problem this scenario poses to Floyd's consequentialist intervention is that the realist camp in this debate represents *the* mainstream form of security analysis in the United States (Peterson et al, 2005), and therefore should have carried some currency against the neoconservative position. In contrast Floyd seems to acknowledge the marginalization of critical security studies in broader academia. Floyd even goes so far as to position the synthesis of the Welsh and Copenhagen Schools as a consolidation

of critical approaches to present a united front against mainstream security analysis, as well as a move to present policy makers with real alternatives (2007:336).

With this in mind consider the following mental simulation: what would have happened if in 2002 critical security analysts had engaged in similar acts of discouragement, such as taking out a paid advertisement in the *New York Times* contesting the rationale for the war, albeit on different grounds from the ‘national interest’? For example, such a critical security analyst might argue that a militaristic approach to weapons proliferation is misguided, and that true security is derived from freeing oppressed groups from their basic human needs of personal safety, education, health care, and so on. These cannot be achieved through a military conflict with Iraq, and such an event may be counterproductive to doing so.

Would this kind of argument have any effect in the broader securitizing discourse? If the arguably more mainstream realist security studies failed to discourage the securitization, then it is unlikely the much more marginalized critical security studies would have been more effective. With this conclusion in mind, it is possible to say that a consequentialist ethics, at least in its current formulation, does not constitute a viable practice for governing securitization.

Towards a (re)evaluation of the ethics of securitization

This analysis portrays a pessimistic view of the current literature on the ethics of securitization. While the theories examined perform unevenly across the practicality evaluation (e.g. Aradau’s emancipatory ethics has a more explicit view of agency than found in Huysmans’ deconstructivist strategy) all demonstrate serious flaws. As forms of social practice designed to undermine the logic of security the above theories are problematic.

It could be argued that this is an unfair assessment given the narrowness of the field and the limited time and attention the problem of desecuritization has faced. As the study of

securitization progresses, as many would argue it is (C.A.S.E., 2006), continuing research will bring the process of desecuritization into sharper focus with greater theoretical and empirical maturity to follow. While this optimism may be warming, it masks what may be a more systemic problem. Here I would like to outline a preliminary explanation as to why these approaches involve a more fundamental misunderstanding of the process of securitization. The starting point is the problem of viewing security as a logic in strictly rationalist terms.

The crux of the problem is that these strategies presuppose a specific model of securitization for their success to be feasible. This kind of thinking is perhaps best captured with the metaphor of the Socratic individual. In its simplest form, what the normative theorists of securitization envision is a Socratic-like figure – endowed with reason – as a means to cut through the cheap rhetoric that so often characterizes security discourse. Through a kind of Socratic method, this individual could question and scrutinize the claims of the securitizing agent and force them to more rigorously justify themselves. This kind of interrogation, occurring in public and in open view of the audience, would separate the sophists of security, from those who brought more legitimate claims to the public's attention. Without this kind of intellectually authority, the audience will be at the mercy of the rhetoric of cheap punditry, more often than not with hidden agendas.

This approach didn't work for Socrates, and it won't work for normative theorists of securitization. Despite the caliber of his intellect the audience of Socrates' trial, the jury still found him to be a threat to the state and chose to execute him. While it might be comforting to think that the better argument, from a rational-analytical perspective, would always win, it is commonsensical to recognize that convincing an audience often requires more than that. Put another way, Socrates may have been right, but he certainly was not persuasive, at least not

enough to convince the jury of his innocence. Ask any effective public speaker how to be more convincing and a common answer may well be: play to their emotions. In the context of security, this takes on a more precise meaning: play to their fears.

What these approaches ignore are the *emotional* implications of the language of security. This point can be drawn out with a contrast to Huysmans' approach, especially to his later work on the aesthetic of horror. In looking at aesthetics Huysmans is examining security from a different perspective: its sensual aspect. In examining the aesthetic of horror, he recognizes that political realism is not limited by the existential fear it engenders, but that feelings of fear provides a rich foundation for political identity, an identity framed in the strongest terms of friend vs. enemy locked in a cosmic struggle (1998b:588). What is important here is not so much rational deliberation, but affect or emotion, specifically the feeling of fear. Here feelings of fear become a rich source of identity and a powerful motivation to legitimate new security practices.

How does this observation inform our understanding of other ethics of securitization? The clearest implication is that they lack an understanding of how emotion influences securitization, and subsequently desecuritization. While each respective theory may ascertain the harms that result from the securitization of an issue, understanding the emotional dimensions of security moves may well be key to designing effective intervention strategies.

A more specific example can illustrate the argument. Consider Williams' approach and the problem of what I will identity as 'existential negotiation'. The concept of existential negotiation captures the inherent tension of calm, rational deliberation in profoundly important matters of life and death. On the one side, there is the notion of an existential threat which can only be couched in terms of affective relation, because existential threats are about fear. I

emphasize affect over reason because threats to existence are only considered such when they are accompanied by the raw emotional anxiety over life and death. On the other side there is the concept of negotiation. While the idea of negotiation does not completely encapsulate the notion of dialogue in discursive ethics, it does highlight the give and take nature of the discursive encounter. The encounter does not occur with two sides firmly entrenched in immutable views coming together to bluster, but rather is idealized as (at least) two parties coming together with an openness to change their views based on reasoned argument. While my position may be compromised, so may yours, but through dialogue we can discern the most reasonable position.

Taken together the concept of existential threat and negotiation are entirely antithetical. One cannot simply negotiate when facing the specter of an existential threat. In fact, the antithetical relationship between existential threat and negotiation is so widely recognized that society has codified laws which prohibit the practice of negotiation under the stress of existential threat. Yet existential negotiation is precisely what argumentative ethics looks like when applied to the field of security. Interlocutors are asked to expose their affective relationship to perceived existential threats, matters of 'security', to the rational scrutiny of others, others who may have equally fantastical notions of existential threat, but still views yours as irrational. While the argumentative ethic may have problems with emotions more broadly, when brought to bear on the securitization analytic it is confronted with what are possibly the most intensely affective relationships, the ones that characterizes feelings of life and death. Thus, when in the discursive encounter, I cannot simply hope to 'reason' with my arachnophobic partner over his or her fear of spiders. Williams' argumentative ethics fails because it does not account for affect.

This is only a preliminary form of what a psychological critique of the securitization theory, and its normative derivatives, might look like. While the focus of this chapter has been

on the ethics of securitization and the strategies of intervention they advocate, the conclusion here suggests these approaches overlook a key element in the securitization process. The task now is to turn to the literature on emotion in psychology and assess its implications for securitization in manner that is theoretically and empirically informed. These are the subjects of the fourth and fifth chapters respectively.

Chapter 4: Affect, Appraisal, and Securitization Theory

In the last chapter I discussed how various strategies for intervention found within ethical approaches to securitization are deeply flawed. While intended for real word political practice, the kinds of interventions prescribed by Williams, Floyd and Aradau²⁹ are unlikely to succeed in either preventing the securitization of an issue, or bringing an already securitized issue back into the realm of normal politics. This pessimism is due to a view shared amongst the approaches: that the securitizing act involves a form of rational/deliberative exchange. Seeing the speech act as a rational debate obscures the emotional foundations of securitization, especially the centrality of the audience's experience of fear.³⁰ This leads to the development of strategies which look to rationally contest the claims of securitizing agents when the real focus should be directed to how agents engender particular emotional dispositions within an audience.

This critique is rooted in a particular view of securitization that these approaches presuppose. Consider Floyd's notion that the enlightened security analyst can intervene in the practice of securitization and elicit a 'positive' outcome.³¹ Endowed with special knowledge and reason, the analyst can scrutinize the claims of the securitizing agent and rationally deliberate on whether or not an issue would be better served if it were to be securitized, and then convey this to the audience. Rational/deliberative behaviour must carry some weight in the practice of securitization, because that's precisely what these strategies are predicated upon. Similarly, Williams' notion of restraining the practice of securitization through a discursive ethics – which can be reduced to a form of reasoned dialogue – also depends on this view.

²⁹ Jef Huysmans fits into another category, although as discussed last chapter I am equally pessimistic about his position, but for reasons other than the focus here.

³⁰ For the purposes of this paper I will use affect, emotion, and feeling as synonymous

³¹ What is 'positive' is determined through a consequentiality evaluation of the securitizing move for a given issue. It asks would the issue be better with as a security issue, or as a normal political issue? (Floyd, 2007)

Arguing that securitization theory ignores emotions may seem sharply counter intuitive for anyone familiar with the field: the literature is chocked with performative metaphors (Salter, 2008), not infrequent direct references to emotion (Balzacq, 2005:172,179; Vuori, 2010:260), and the more general notion of ‘drama’ (Huysmans, 1995; Salter, 2008). In a particularly penetrating piece of writing Jef Huysmans has likened the practice of securitization to that of telling a frightening story (Huysmans, 1998b). A cursory review of the literature would suggest that the emotion of fear and securitization appear to go hand in hand. But there is a sharp disjuncture between this view and the explicit theoretical framework outlined within the literature, especially the canonical text *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*. Paradoxically, a wide variety of academics have openly criticized alleged ‘fear mongering’ in popular security discourses (de Castella et al, 2009:2), but any systematic consideration of fear in security discourses, especially in securitization theory, is largely absent. This may be due to a wide ranging bias in the discipline of IR which privileges rationality and subordinates emotions, predisposing academics to shirk away from investigating emotional phenomena (Crawford, 2000; Mercer, 2005).

Developing a theory of emotion for the securitization framework is the goal of this chapter. It seeks to answer one deceptively simple question: what role do emotions play in the practice of securitization? This involves examining an important subset of questions such as ‘what do we mean by emotion?’, ‘who experiences emotion in the practice of securitization?’, ‘what does emotion do?’, ‘should we only be looking at fear, or should we consider the role of other emotions such as love and hate?’, ‘how does one go about engendering feeling?’, ‘how does it change the analytical framework from what it is now?’ and so on.

In answering these questions this chapter advances two central claims. First, it approaches feelings of fear through appraisal theory, a cognitive psychology approach to emotions. This approach sees the practice of securitization as dependent upon the audience *appraising* the claims of the agent in a specific way that engenders feelings of fear. It is then the subjective feelings of fear which motivate the audience to view the security measures an agent calls for as legitimate. This methodological shift allows securitization theory to capture the simple political adage that a frightened audience is a pliant audience. Second, by incorporating appraisal theory into the analysis, I offer a more sophisticated analytical model. An appraisal-model of securitization can give a more precise account of audience motivation than current models of securitization, which explain motivation in terms of existential threat. The reason for this is that it isn't claims of an existential threat which motivate an audience to view a novel security measure as legitimate, but rather *how the audience appraises such claims*. Taken together, these claims contend that an analytical framework for emotions in securitization theory is indeed possible, and that it brings added value to the approach.

This argument proceeds in four sections. First, because I am developing a new account of motivation, I work to establish the current baseline for comparison. This involves historically and conceptually situating securitization theory in a manner that illustrates how the concept existential threat constitutes a unique explanation of audience motivation, and then focusing on the analytical problems associated with it. Second, I provide a general introduction to appraisal theory and discuss what an appraisal-informed model of securitization may look like. Third, I examine the methodological similarities and differences between conventional (Copenhagen) securitization theory and an appraisal model. Finally, this discussion is supplemented with an

exploration of some of the more obvious criticisms which could be leveled in response to an appraisal variant of securitization theory. Empirical illustrations are reserved for chapter five.

In terms of its relationship to the broader project at hand, this chapter develops a critique of securitization theory and the normative approaches which flow from it. By showing how emotion is central to the practice of securitization we can more explicitly identify why the prescriptions outlined by the ethics of securitization are likely to fail.

More importantly, developing such a theory opens us to a means to reconstruct these ethical approaches to make them mindful of the importance of emotion. If normative theorists want to influence practices of securitization, they need to know how those practices are wholly constituted. At a more practical level, a better understanding of emotion in securitization would allow normative theorists to devise more effective intervention strategies to obstruct or counter security speech acts. If one suggests, as I do below, that the practice of securitization hinges upon how the audiences appraise the claims of an agent, then this creates a valuable new window intervening agency. Recall, as discussed in the second and third chapters, that agency here refers to the ability of an entity to elicit change in the outcome of the practice of securitization. If the practice of securitization hinges upon audience appraisal, and in turn the dynamics of affect which stem from it, then this is what normative securitization theorists should focus on in their prescriptions.

Fear and Existential Threat

It is tempting to think that the concept of fear, and perhaps by extension emotion, is somehow already accounted for in securitization theory. One might ask: isn't the presence of fear already accounted for in the concept of existential threat? Such a query may be followed with an argument that feelings of fear and existential threat are synonymous, or at least very similar.

Therefore, the securitization framework already accounts for fear in some way, albeit perhaps implicitly. After all, it is the sense of existential threat which motivates the audience to view new security measures as legitimate. If fear is part and parcel of existential threat then it must be part of the practice of securitization.

In this view the idea of existential threat may seem an acceptable substitute for any explicit consideration of fear. But fear and existential threat are not synonymous, and while they may be related, it would be a mistake to see them as interchangeable. Even a superficial examination of the two concepts reveals the disparity. An existential threat, such as nuclear annihilation, may be something I fear, but I may also fear being late for an important appointment. Immediately, the difference between fear and existential threat becomes apparent when considering the idea of gradation or intensity. The concept of existential threat functions as a strict binary: similar to the notion of pregnancy, you are either existentially threatened, or you are not, and there are no varying degrees in between.³² In contrast, feelings of fear are commonly seen to be operating on an extremely wide ranging spectrum. So there is some distinct difference between the two concepts, but how are they related?

One way to gain traction on this question is to examine their historical relationship in the study of security. Classical political realism, from which securitization theory draws its conceptual antecedent,³³ holds fear as a central to explaining political order. Hobbes' state of nature argument, for example, contends that fear of death motivates men to seek security under the sovereign. Fear may motivate men to seek security, but it is important to note that in this

³² The Copenhagen School emphasize the needs to be explicit about the threshold which differentiates the existentially threatening, from the less threatening (Buzan et al, 1998:25), but in general the concept of threshold remains under theorized. To see a more explicit view of threshold or 'passing of the limit' look to Huysmans (1998b).

³³ This may seem counter intuitive for people who read securitization as a brand of critical security studies, separate and distinct from realist security studies. However, the influence of classical political realism, especially Carl Schmitt and Thomas Hobbes is well documented (Williams, 2003; Huysmans, 1995).

view feelings of fear work in tandem with something else: reason. Fear may have driven men to seek out security, but it is instrumental strategic thinking, informed by reason, which creates specific practices of security (Huysmans, 1995:58-59). Fear and reason work together to produce security: an army seems reasonable when I fear invasion, a navy seems reasonable when I fear piracy, martial law seems reasonable when I fear civil unrest, and so on. Fear and reason work in a kind of symbiosis: without fear there would be no need to think strategically about the dangers we face because we would not even care, but without reason there would be no way to manage our fears.

Like any intellectual heir, securitization theory retains some of its predecessor's ideas, but organizes them in a novel and substantively different manner. Fear remains important, but is subsumed into the more central concept of existential threat. In the text *SNFA* there are only 15 entries for 'fear'. The word 'fear' is frequently used in the context of what states either currently, or have in the past, feared, including: neighboring states (11), communism (110), the breakdown of the liberal economic order (113), political integration (158), and so on. None of these instances comes close to defining a specific role for fear within securitization theory. The closest Buzan *et al* get to identifying a specific role for fear in securitization is in the following excerpt:

"This self based violation of the rules is the security act, and the fear that the other party will not let us survive as a subject is the foundational motivation for the act." (Buzan et al, 1998:26)

For securitization theory, the motivation for consenting to security measures is found in a specific kind of fear: fear for survival. An existential threat that is perceived by an audience when they fear there is a threat to their survivability.

Is this not a sufficient account of motivation in the practice of securitization? If the concept of existential threat can account for motivation in the securitization framework, what other reason can there be to consider emotion other than comprehensiveness?

Here I would like to offer two distinct critiques of the concept of existential threat. I will call the first one the ‘bluntness’ critique.³⁴ This critique is common in the securitization literature, and is deeply rooted in what has become called the ‘Paris School’ of security studies (C.A.S.E., 2006:449).³⁵ Simply put, it argues that the concept of existential threat is too blunt an instrument to capture the empirical nuance of real world security politics. The second, and arguably more important critique I will look at is what I will call the ‘theatrical’ critique. In this critique I leverage what I see as a common ‘theatrical’ metaphor in the literature to explain a very serious analytical gap in the securitization framework. Let us start with examining the bluntness critique.

A recurring criticism of the concept of existential threat in the literature is that it does not accurately reflect the empirical picture of security politics. This is to say that securitization theory is biased towards looking only at grand transformative security speech acts in world politics at the expense of everyday mundane security practices. Two interrelated claims are at play here. The first is that lesser non-existential threats are often involved in security discourses and practices. Clearly, there are some things dealt with in the politics of security that cannot be rendered in terms of immediate threat to survival. International narcotics smuggling may be harmful, even threatening to a state, but it would be difficult to render in terms of existential threat (although some may have tried). Similarly, piracy could easily be seen as a security issue

³⁴ I owe this characterization to Mira Sucharov

³⁵ I am not going to draw the Paris School and its core thinkers such as Didier Bigo into this discussion as much as some people may prefer. This is not to depreciate their work, but rather to show that the concerns behind the ‘bluntness’ critique extend beyond one institutional setting.

requiring a military response, such as a naval patrol, but it could not be rendered, at least in the contemporary context, as an existential threat. These kinds of issues are typically dealt with in bureaucratized environments which avoid the sensationalist and dramatic language of existential threat. Felix Ciuata gives the example of European integration into the common institutional frameworks of the EU, NATO, and OSCE. This process is defined by policy makers as the realm of security policy, however, because such integration is absent the language of existential threat conventional securitization theory would not treat these as matters of ‘security’ (Ciuata, 2009:312).

The second claim in the bluntness critique is that existential threats often do not emerge suddenly, but are more likely to emerge gradually over time. Military invasion, nuclear war, and environmental degradation may all be existentially threatening, but these issues typically take time to develop. However, these issues may concern us even before they pass the threshold of existential threat and in turn be discussed and treated as security issues. As Rita Abrahamsen notes:

“Rather than emergency action, most security politics is concerned with the much more mundane management of risk, and security issues can be seen to move on a continuum from normalcy to worrisome/troublesome to risk and to existential threat—and conversely, from threat to risk and back to normalcy.” (2005:59)

For all intents and purposes, the analytical focus on existential threats blinds securitization theory to all security politics that exists below the register of survivability. Existential threat is therefore too blunt a concept to engage with the empirical nuance that characterizes security politics.

While the bluntness critique of the concept existential threat goes some ways towards showing the limitations of current models of securitization theory, I do not believe it can lead to a major reevaluation or reformulation of the framework. One could safely agree with the critique

of existential threat discussed above and still argue against considering an alternative account of motivation. Such an argument could adopt a limitation strategy by contending that not every use of the word ‘security’ is important (a very reasonable claim). In this view, what makes the word important is when it is directly linked to existential threats because this legitimizes the most *significant* security practices such as military operations, substantial changes in funding, violations of laws, etc. By arguing that some instances of the word security are more important than others to study of world politics, securitization theory could retain existential threat as a viable and useful concept. Obviously, the notion of significance here is open to debate. Advocates of the bluntness critique, especially the Paris School, can and do argue that the more mundane, bureaucratic practices of security, such as everyday policing and border control technologies are significant precisely because they are a part of everyday life (C.A.S.E., 2006:457). This is true, but it in no way diminishes the significance conventional securitization theory ascribes to the more exceptional, radical practices of security, including war, armed conflict, and every other conceivable rupture of what is taken as ‘normal politics’. I’m not sure any particular debate between the mundane and exceptional practices of security is really helpful or needed at this juncture. Regardless, the important point to take away is that the framing of securitization theory as examining the most exceptional or significant practices of security allows it to successfully bypass the bluntness critique.

This leaves us with our second critique, what I call the ‘theatrical’ critique. The initial premise of this critique suggest that there are two ways in which the practice of securitization is represented in the literature. I want to suggest that the more common way sees securitization through a sociological, linguistic, and academic lens, while the second ways sees securitization through a theatrical lens.

When discussing securitization theory analysts typically gravitate towards a sociological a linguistic understanding of the practice. In this view the security speech act is a social practice anchored around the enunciation of an existential threat. Successfully conveying a sense of existential threat to an audience depends on three facilitating conditions: having the agent's message correctly understood as conveying a threat (grammar), having the agent perceived as trustworthy (social capital), and having the threat bear some resemblance to something has been previously been accepted as a threat or is conducive to that characterization (nature of the threat) (Buzan *et al*, 1998:33). Theoretical discussion of securitization is oriented around the communication of a particular social logic (27).

Yet when discussing the actual practice itself, or when trying to explain some of the particularly obtuse sociological and linguistic theory behind securitization, analysts often turn to another view, a view which I will call the theatrical metaphor. In this view, securitizing agents are seen as performers. Audiences are no longer social collectivities subject to a speech act, but patrons to a dramatic experience. Securitization is fueled by a sense of drama (Salter, 2008:328; Buzan, *et al*, 1998:26; Huysmans, 1995:66; Atland and Ven Bruusgard, 2009:345). One obvious explanation for this practice is that the theatrical metaphor works as a useful pedagogical and explanatory tool, condensing complex social theory into an experience everyone can relate to: theatre.³⁶

An interesting exception to the use of theatrical metaphor is in Mark Salter's dramaturgical analysis of securitization (2008). He explicitly draws upon the language of theatrical studies to develop a theory of different audience settings where securitization can occur: popular, elite, technocratic, and scientific. According to Salter, each "settings structures

³⁶ David Campbell (1998) also uses the notion of performance in discussing security, although in a manner distinctly separate from securitization theory. Much of the current work discussing performativity comes from post- structural feminist scholars such as Judith Butler and Christine Sylvester (Salter, 2008:328)

the speaker–audience relationship of knowledge and authority, the weight of social context, and the success of the securitizing move.” (2008:328). In short, audiences can significantly affect the outcome of a securitizing move.

I find Salter’s argument convincing. Moreover, his turn to understanding securitization in theatrical terms confirms my belief that this kind of perspective is more than just an elegant metaphor that helps us understand securitization. Metaphors can, in some instances, actually convey more understanding than a conventional analytical explanation. The theatrical metaphor is useful because it contains elements of the practice of securitization that more rigid sociological and linguistic views overlook. It is in this spirit that I would like to take Salter’s approach one step further and argue that one of the reasons the theatrical metaphor is so alluring is that it captures one simple element not accounted for by more stoic sociological views: a sense of drama. Indeed, drama, the ability to convey emotion and leave one’s audience in suspense, is at the core of security speech act. Or, if I were to adopt the theatrical metaphor myself, emotion is at the core of the security performance. Such a performance needs to vividly resonate with the audience in manner that produces an emotional response, one that legitimates what would previously have been seen as radical security measures.

To say that emotion is at the core of the practice of securitization may seem banal. It would seem disingenuous to think of existential threat as something above or separate from emotion – after all, existential threat is based on fear for survival and what could be more emotional than situations of life and death? But it is often the most taken for granted assumptions which deserve reflection. If one examines sociological variants of securitization theory,³⁷ you will find them distinctly lacking any significant consideration of emotion. The key

³⁷ A different case might be made for securitization theorists like Jef Huysman who take a more poststructural approach to securitization.

emotion to securitization, fear, has been subsumed into the concept of existential threat. This concept is understood sociologically and linguistically, but most definitely not psychologically.

A defender of the more conventional view of securitization might object to this claim. Such an objection may well agree that emotion is key to the security performance, especially the audiences' acceptance of the actor's claims. However, they might argue that affect is implicit when the actor communicates a sense of existential threat to the audience. As long as the appropriate social and linguistic conditions of the speech act are met, the so-called facilitating conditions, a sense of existential threat will be conveyed to the audience, and with it so too will feelings of fear. In this view the speech act is not bereft of emotion, it is simply implicit.

I do not find this argument convincing for two reasons. First, it assumes that the social and linguistic conditions (proper grammar, social capital, and nature of threat) which facilitate a successful speech act translate into some emotional resonance with the audience. This is a difficult argument to make. It may be possible to argue that the trust worthiness (social capital) of the actor may make the audience more empathetic to his or her claims. Consider the childhood experience of hearing a parent telling a scary story, as opposed to hearing it from another child. The adult's scary story is often more convincing because the adult is a more trustworthy, authoritative figure. But being a particularly authoritative or trustworthy figure doesn't necessarily translate into being able to engender a sense of emotion in an audience. The graveyard of political careers is filled with what might be called trustworthy individuals who lacked charisma. Furthermore, how does the actor employing the grammar of security make the audience feel afraid? Returning to the example of the childhood story, is reading from the right script really enough? Any parent who has faced the dejection of being told they would rather have mommy or daddy read the story instead has been confronted with the cruel fact that simply

having script in hand does not make one an effective story teller. Finally, it is not at all clear how the nature of the threats the actor speaks of translates into any particular emotional disposition for the audience. In sum, it would take a great deal of theoretical elaboration of the current sociological/linguistic models to show how they engender emotion amongst the audience. If defenders of this model of securitization theory concede emotion is important, which I believe they must, then they must show how their current framework explains this.

Second, even if sociological models of securitization could explain why audiences experience fear as a result of the speech act, it would be epiphenomenal to their explanation. These explanations hold the social and linguistic conditions of the speech act as primary to their explanation. Any consideration of emotion from these approaches is an afterthought. In contrast I believe emotional disposition of the audience to be central to the success of the speech act. After all, one of the key measures of dramatic performance is ability to evoke vivid feeling (i.e. did the performance move you?). No drama and no suspense equals no emotion. Without the subjective feelings of fear, what motivates the audience to view new security measures as legitimate?

This theatrical critique poses a much more significant challenge for securitization theory than the bluntness critique. Unlike the case of the bluntness critique discussed above, a delimitation strategy that works to narrow the analytical focus of securitization theory is not a viable option here. Affect cannot be cleanly separated from the analysis, because it plays a central constitutive role in the concept of existential threat – the lynchpin of current approaches. Any reference to existential threat presupposes fear, but it also obscures its constitutive influence on the security speech act.

Obscuring the role of affect in securitization has very significant consequences. It artificially injects a degree of apathy and coolness into the security speech act. This can lead to the false impression that securitization entails a kind of cool headed exchange – a point I believe securitization theorists work to counter with the theatrical metaphor. More importantly, it can lead to presupposing the presence of what is commonly taken as the opposite of emotion: rationality (Mercer, 2006:289). Working within a view where emotion and rationality are taken as binary opposites, a problematic view that we could very well ascribe to a vast portion of western thought (Lazarus, 2001:60; Mercer, 2006, 2010), the absence of emotion can lead one to presuppose the presence rationality. Obscuring the role of emotion in security speech can then lead one to presuppose the presence of rationality, and in turn open the window to seeing the security speech act as a rational exchange.

It is here where the critique of rationalism in the ethics of securitization discussed last chapter, and the theatrical critique currently being made, meet. The belief that a kind of Socratic individual can intervene and change the direction of the securitization speech act is a product of presupposing that rationality governs the interaction. This presupposition can be traced back to the sociological/linguistic understandings of securitization which obscure the role of affect. The reason ethical theorists conceive of such flawed normative strategies to obstruct the speech act is because they are operating from the assumptions of a specific sociological/linguistic approach, an approach which, through a series of methodological moves, obscures the role of affect. Flawed prescription emerges from flawed description.

It is difficult to overstate the problem this poses for the study of securitization. The study of securitization is valuable because it helps us explain key puzzles in world politics such as why, when, and how issues become matters of security, even if it does so with a problematic

methodology. This approach has no doubt enhanced our understanding of the world. But this contribution pales in comparison to securitization theory's normative cousin who seeks to provide practical, real world policy advice to circumscribe the expansion of security issues. Given the broad proliferation of security issues since the end of the Cold War (see Chapter 1), and the deleterious effects that associated with securitization (see Chapter 2), and the inadequacy of current approaches (see Chapter 3) this is an eminently important goal. But these kinds of strategic interventions into the process of securitization cannot work until the process itself is more wholly understood. To do so is to presume a moral agency which is isn't empirically valid, and in turn consign oneself to the IR's disciplinary purgatory. Or, as realists refer to it: idealism. It is ultimately with this goal in mind that the next section looks at what a theory of securitization might look like if it were anchored around the concept of emotion.

Fear and Appraisal Theory

Emotion is a phenomenally difficult subject to study. Early engagements with emotion in IR are all characterized by a struggle to somehow capture the ephemeral nature of emotions into some form of coherent meaning (Crawford, 2000; Mercer, 2006; Ross, 2006; Bleiker and Hutchinson, 2008). There exists a subtle irony here. On one hand, emotions are so common place, so ubiquitous, that it almost seems banal to study them. On the other hand, the methodological complexities of examining this everyday experience are daunting.

This observation emphasizes the need to reflect seriously about the methodological choices made when studying emotion. There is a wide variety of approaches available to study emotion in IR including cognitive neuroscience (Mercer, 2010; Mercer, 2006), what can be called neo-Jamesian approaches (Ross, 2006), interpretative humanistic approaches (Bleiker and Hutchinson, 2008), psychoanalytic perspectives (Sucharov, 2005), cognitive accounts (Martha

Nussbaum, 2001), as well as agnostic/pluralistic views (Crawford, 2000). This research broadens the above field with the introduction of new approach called cognitive appraisal theory.³⁸ The question now becomes why use appraisal theory and not one of the already existing alternatives?

In answering this question it is worth noting that first and foremost, the study of emotion must be carried out pluralistically. Different perspectives on emotion should not be viewed as in a zero-sum competition to develop the most comprehensive understanding of emotion. Emotional phenomenon are dynamic, complex, and multidimensional, and therefore it is likely that each approach can only explain part of the picture. This multidimensional nature makes agnostic/pluralistic approaches to emotions, like the approach suggested by Neta Crawford (2000), eminently reasonable.

However, just because we accept the need for pluralism doesn't mean we have to adopt a shotgun-style analysis into our framework where we attempt to account for every single different dimension of emotion (i.e. neurological, cognitive, social, unconscious, behavioural, etc.) into our analysis. In fact, the majority of perspectives on emotion outlined above focus on one specific dimension of emotion. Pluralism may be a guiding principle, but it does not prohibit a division of labour where different approaches look at different dimensions of emotion. A clinical/physiological approach to feelings of love may tell equally important and compelling, but ultimately different things than a cognitive or psychoanalytical approach. In fact, this pluralism is desirable in that it creates a diverse forum for academic debate amongst different perspectives on emotional phenomena.

³⁸ Ross (2006) argues that a cognitive appraisal approach is typical, or at least implicit, in previous constructivist work on emotions. I believe this is debatable. The ideas supporting appraisal theory may be evident in authors such as Martha Nussbaum (2001), and by extension authors such as Khaled Fattah and K.M. Fierke (2009). However, a search on Google Scholar for 'International Relations' and 'Appraisal Theory' yields zero results. Direct engagement with appraisal theory has been minimal.

So far this rationale justifies taking a more focused non-pluralistic approach, such as appraisal theory, but it doesn't explain why one should choose appraisal theory in the study of securitization over any of the alternatives. Here I would argue that appraisal theory is uniquely suited to the study of securitization. In its simplest formulation, the analytical gap we are attempting to fill in securitization theory is how audiences react to claims of an existential threat. We are especially concerned with how claims of existential threat can produce emotional reactions within an audience. Appraisal theory is useful in this task because it suggests audiences might experience fear if such claims were appraised in a specific manner. In keeping with the theatrical metaphor discussed above, the idea of appraisal can best understood as how the audience judges the performance, especially from their own psycho-social disposition.

In contrast, alternative approaches are not focused on exploring how emotions are produced in reaction to a particular event. For example, Mercer's (2010) neuroscience approach focuses on the complex interplay between emotion and rationality and how the two are codependent. While exploring this theme may be interesting and revealing to the study of securitization, it is not central to the inquiry at hand. Similarly, the naturalistic and biological approaches suggested by Crawford's pluralism (2000), which largely focus on the evolutionary and physiological origins of emotions, may be insightful, but it is not as calibrated to the study of security performances as appraisal theory. This is not to say that themes such as rationality and evolutionary biology are absent from the impending discussion (they are not), but rather that they are peripheral to our stated goal of understanding how emotional dispositions come about as a result of the security performance. Appraisal theory is more appropriate because it focuses on how people react emotionally to situations, or, in our case, security speech acts. To better

understand this premise it would be helpful to elaborate on some of the basic claims of appraisal theory itself.

Like many areas of psychology appraisal theory (AT) is a highly diverse field. However, there are a few common assumptions held across the field, and those identified by Roseman and Smith's (2001) summary are worth mentioning. According to AT the differences we experience in our subjective states of feeling can be accounted for by differing appraisals – how we evaluate events, situations, and things (2001:3). You and I may be exposed to similar situations – a car crash, the loss of a job, stormy weather – and have different emotional reactions because we evaluate these situations differently. I may appraise a situation at one point in my life, such as the loss of a job, as a devastating blow to my career, only to appraise the same situation later in life as a possibility for a new beginning. Emotions are not 'locked' into specific events or situations, they are conscious and unconscious states of mind (and body) which result from appraisals of the here and now.

AT accounts for the continuity of emotions across different situations and time by arguing that if the same appraisal pattern is applied, then the event will elicit the same feelings. Different emotions are associated with differing patterns of appraisal. For example, the appraisal pattern for romantic sadness includes the sense that something desired has been lost, with certainty, and cannot be recovered (2001:3). All of the necessary components of an appraisal must be present to elicit a particular emotion.

In explicit reference to the evolutionary role of emotions, many AT theorists argue that emotions will often be appropriate to the situations or events in which they occur. For example, the passivity of sadness over a close relative's death may help conserve resources that anger or protest might waste (Roseman and Smith, 2001:8). Here emotions are seen as means to help

people adapt to new situations by appraising the situation and offering the appropriate response that are congruent with their innermost goals and motives. In the broader emotion vs. rationality debate that occupies IR (Mercer, 2006) AT sees emotions as eminently rational, and as a means to pursue enduring motivations, whatever they may be.

One key point where AT deviates from other theories of emotion is its belief that cognition generally precedes emotion. The term ‘general’ is the operational word here as a strictly linear view of causality is problematic given the propensity for emotional outcomes to feed back into a perceptual loop. A better alternative may be to see the human perceptual system as constantly appraising the world and looking for change, including situations and events that are unchanging (Roseman and Smith, 2001:7). AT research varies as to whether the appraisal process is automatic or consciously controlled, suggesting that sometimes we do make a conscious effort to control our appraisals, and in turn our emotions (i.e. consider the phrase ‘look on the brighter side of things’). The cognition presupposed by AT should not be construed as a kind of rational/deliberative behaviour. AT has argued that the appraisal process frequently operates on an ‘intuitive’ or ‘low level’ cognitive processing, but that this doesn’t necessarily preclude higher level deliberative processing (2001:9). This distinction comes into focus when emotions become viewed as problematic or ‘irrational’. Sometimes the unconscious, lower level appraisal processing can come into conflict with higher level processing. For example “when a visitor to the zoo hears the loud roar of a lion and feels fear although she ‘knows’ that ‘there is nothing to be afraid of’ because the lion is securely locked in a cage” (Ibid).

Beyond the problem of reconciling differing levels of cognition, appraisals are also complicated by conflicting accounts of motivation. Central to all appraisals is an evaluation of whether or not a situation is motivationally relevant or not. In this respect emotion is a deeply

personal phenomena in that it consistently relates perceptions of the self, such as motivations and goals, to worldly phenomena. This means that any understanding of appraisals must take into how one's ego, identity, life goals, etc. help to configure the constitutive components of an appraisal (i.e. What is motivationally relevant? What is incongruent with my goals, etc.). Situations which have a mixed impact on one's motivational goals can lead to the appraisal process becoming muddled (2001:10). Consider the example of receiving an important promotion in your work which came at the expense of a very close colleague. This kind of situation is both relevant and incongruent with one's motivational goals, resulting in a mixed appraisal, which in turn produces mixed feelings.

This gives a very general account of AT, but for our purposes I wish to focus on a particularly popular variant known as the Richard Lazarus' cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion (Lazarus, 1991; Smith and Lazarus, 1993). The reason for this choice is two-fold. First, Lazarus was at the center of the development of AT and is seen as providing the early theoretical framework which "provides the scaffolding of all modern appraisal theories" (Schorr, 2001:23). Lazarus' work can therefore be understood as a fairly good representation of AT research. Secondly, this choice is inspired by the operationalization of Lazarus' model by an Australian political psychology research team in 2009. The research team undertook a textual analysis of Prime Minister John Howard's "speeches about terrorism to assess whether all the necessary appraisal components [were] present to produce a fear response" (de Castella *et al*, 2009:5). Although exploratory in nature, the researchers found repeated instances of the appraisal components required to produce fear in the audience. In a conclusion that is particularly relevant to securitization theory, the researchers found that:

“As support for antiterrorist policies is increasingly required, these initial relationships between the audience and terrorism appear to be sharpened, in these cases into fear appeals. The strongest fear appeals thus emerged at a time of high political tension and declining support for the government and its policies, in particular, immediately prior to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.” (de Castella *et al*, 2009:22)

There is a startling congruency between this kind of work, and the basic thematic thrust of securitization research. Both focus of the mobilization of political power in the communication of security issues. The fact that Lazarus’ model could be utilized so effectively on the exact same terrain as securitization theory suggests the possibility of a fruitful relationship between the two.

In terms of the specific structure of Lazarus’ model, de Castella *et al* provide an excellent summary of what is required for successful fear appraisals:

“In this model, Lazarus identifies three key appraisal components necessary for the production of fear. These include: (a) an appraisal that the situation, event, or object is motivationally or goal relevant to the perceiver; (b) an appraisal that the situation, event, or object is motivationally/goal incongruent to the perceiver; and (c) an appraisal that one has low or uncertain ability to cope with a present threat.” (2009:5)

In addition to these three criteria, there is a fourth element required for a successful fear appraisal. In Lazarus’ view appraisals are divided into smaller, lower level constructs, what he calls molecular level appraisals. When the lower level appraisal conditions are fulfilled, they synthesize into larger level constructs, what he calls molar level appraisals. These are centred on a specific core-relational theme defined as “a terse synthesis of the separate appraisal components into a complex, meaning-centered whole [which] determines the nature of the emotional response” (de Castella *et al*, 2009:5, quoting Lazarus, 2001). In the case of fear appraisals the core relational theme is threat – a general sense of uncertainty and danger. In sum, the four appraisal components required for a successful fear appraisal by an audience include the following:

1. Motivational relevance (i.e. is the situation important to you?)
2. Motivational incongruence (i.e. is the situation harmful to you or inconsistent with your goals?)
3. Inability to cope (i.e. are you currently able to deal with the situation?)
4. Theme of threat (i.e. can the situation be summarized into the theme of threat?)

Unless all four criteria are met the appraisal required to produce fear is not likely to be made.

For example, if a situation meets the first two criteria, but is not evaluated as being difficult to cope with, anger might elicited instead (Ibid).

In terms of integrating the appraisal framework into securitization theory, the best way to represent this is perhaps a visual model of the security speech act. Below I present two distinct models of securitization. In figure 1, my representation of conventional approaches, the agent makes the dual claim that an existential threat exists and that the concomitant security measures³⁹ must be mobilized to deal with it. The centre of gravity in this model is in the concept of existential threat, because its successful communication determines whether an audience will view new security measures as legitimate.

Figure 1 – Conventional Securitization Theory

³⁹ These are typically seen as exceptional measures, or measures that in some way stand apart from normal politics. I simply label them 'security measures' because I disagree with their frequent characterization as exceptional measures as per the 'bluntness' critique above.

Figure 2 offers a visibly minor, but substantively significant change. This model shifts the center of gravity away from the communication of existential threat and towards the audience's appraisal. In this view threats can be communicated in a manner that meet all the sociological and linguistic requirements of a successful security speech act (i.e. using the 'grammar' of security), but still fail because the claims are not appraised in a manner that generates fear. Without feelings of fear, the audience will lack the motivation to see the corresponding security measures as legitimate. And it is whether an issue is widely recognized as legitimately constituting an existential threat which determines if something can become a matter of security (Buzan *et al*, 1998:36-37).

Figure 2 – Appraisal Securitization Theory

There are two key features of this approach that are not captured within the graphical representation. The first is the role of rationality. The concept of rational behaviour is not captured in conventional approaches to securitization because these approaches tend to focus on the social and linguistic constitution of security issues. As a broader consequence of the cultural and social turn in IR the role of rationality has come to be, at certain times, overlooked. However, I have argued above that normative theorists tend to implicitly view the speech act as a kind of rational dialogue. Given that rationality and emotion are commonly viewed as polar opposites within the political science community (Mercer, 2006), the inclusion of affect into the securitization framework is likely to prompt a greater reflection on the role of rationality as well.

Consider for example how if a person is said to be acting emotionally, we might also say they are acting irrationally. If emotion is central to the practice of securitization, does this make the politics of security irrational? This would be an awkward position to sustain, if for no other reason than the general sense that some sort of rational/strategic behaviour is as ubiquitous in the politics of security as emotion. Furthermore, viewing security issues as products of ‘irrationality’ flies in the face of prevailing realist orthodoxies about the role of rational actors in the formulation of security policy.

A fully satisfactory answer to these questions cannot be elaborated in the small space here. However, what I want to suggest is a return to the position similar to that of classical political realism, especially Hobbes, where emotion and rationality work in tandem. Here emotion is used to establish our values and desires, and reason is employed instrumentally to fulfill these aims. In the above figure this kind of behaviour takes place between the appraisal and the consequential security measures, where once fear of a given threat is established, the audience engages in strategic (rational) thinking about how to deal with a threat. A more modern version of this view can be found in the work of Jonathan Mercer where emotions establish the preferences which in turn allow rational/strategic deliberations to occur (2010:13). One can only make a strategic choice on which security measures are desirable based on what we feel these measures are intended to protect. Mercer leverages recent research in neuroscience to support this claim with the finding that people who have the emotional centres of their brains damaged are unable to establish preferences, leaving them subject to an endless cost-benefit analysis of situations (Ibid). In the context of an appraisal-variant of securitization, rationality is anchored to the strategic thinking that occurs once an audience finds something to be afraid of, and is therefore worth securing.

The second feature of this approach not conveyed by the graphic above is the particular kind of appraisal we are talking about. Is it just fear-appraisals we should be concerned with, or are there other appraisals leading to other emotions that we should consider? Much of the argument up to now has proceeded on the assumption that the central emotion in the politics of security, and by extension the practice of securitization, is the emotion of fear. The focus on fear in securitization is to an extent warranted given that the canonical definition of existential threat is defined by fear for survival (Buzan *et al*, 1998:26). This situates fear at the core, albeit implicitly, of the securitization framework. Moreover, if we view securitization as an intellectual descendent of classical political realism then the focus on fear simply appears as continuation of a common theme from this position. Indeed, Jef Huysmans has argued that the ‘aesthetic of horror’ which underpins the classical political realism of Hobbes and Schmitt extends to the field of securitization theory (1998b). Yet even if fear might be seen as the primordial emotion in the politics of security, the question remains: are there other emotions relevant to the process of securitization?

The answer to this question is undoubtedly yes. Even if we were to assign an immense spectrum of diversity to the feelings of fear each person can experience, it would be highly reductionist to attribute the process of securitization to only one emotion. Affect is dynamic and often involves the experience of different and perhaps even conflicting feelings (consider the above example winning a prestigious promotion at the cost of a colleague). It is entirely plausible to suggest that a securitizing agent may leverage nationalist sentiment, what might be called love of one’s country (Crawford, 2000:120), to persuade an audience of the presence of an existential threat. Similarly, Khaled Fattah and K.M. Fierke have argued that feelings of humiliation and betrayal have been “hijacked” by militant Islamists who in turn employ a logic

of restoring dignity (2009:81-82). It is easy to see the makings of security speech act here when one sees the logic of restoring dignity as means to justify otherwise exceptional measures such as suicide bombings. Not only may there be emotions other than fear at play in practices of securitization, but these emotions may enter into hybrid relations. The desire to avoid further humiliation can also be understood as fear of further embarrassment and degradation. A sense of existential threat may spring from fear of losing something one loves (i.e. an idealized nation or ethnic grouping). Empirically, emotions will often enter complex and hybridized relations, which are often subject to flux. In this sense, any attempt to isolate a singular variety of affect, if we could even conceive of such a thing, would be folly.

Why then does the approach outlined above focus only on the emotion of fear? In part, this approach is justified because fear is so irrevocably connected to the practice of securitization: it is difficult to convey a sense of threat without some sense of fear. The focus on fear here is also justified in terms of division of labour. While an appraisal model suggests the possibility of integrating different forms emotion, the exploratory nature of this argument prohibits advanced investigation. All that can be accomplished here is the opening of a window to make such research possible, which is still more than conventional securitization theory allows.

At this point I have offered a basic overview of a shift to an appraisal model of securitization, but it is likely that the full implications of such a shift are not clearly understood. From the way this change in is graphically portrayed it would be easy to come to the conclusion that it simply adds another 'step' or 'variable' to account for in securitization theory. I believe the implications of shifting to an appraisal model are much more significant. These implications can be further drawn out by comparing this approach with conventional securitization theory.

Securitization Theories in Contrast

Similarities

1. Securitization is still fundamentally a discursive practice

Issues are securitized by how they are discussed (or more broadly, how they are communicated). Whether something is discussed as an existential threat, or something more generally to be feared, it is an attempt to gain that issue political priority. The moniker 'security' is fundamentally about mobilizing power (Floyd, 2007: 328). Switching to a fear-appraisal model of securitization does not disregard the politicization continuum suggested by Buzan *et al*, the notion of seeing issues existing on a spectrum from depoliticized, to politicized, to securitized. However, as the discussion below will demonstrate, an appraisal model of securitization holds that each region of this spectrum is much less sharply demarcated than previously believed.

2. Legitimacy is still key to the success of a securitization

Conventional securitization theory holds that security issues are intersubjectively produced (Buzan *et al*, 1998:29-30). The successful securitization of an issue is dependent on both the agent and the audience; with the former communicating an existential threat, and the latter seeing that threat as a legitimate concern warranting new security measures. A fear-appraisal model still holds legitimacy as central, but it sees the audience's appraisal as the key arbiter of legitimacy. If an agent's claim of existential threat is not something to be feared, even the broadest terms, then the audience cannot take the agent's suggestion of new security measures seriously.

3. The role of the securitizing agent is still important

While early securitization theory was rightly criticized for being too agent-centric (Balzaqc, 2005), there is a similar risk of overly focusing on audiences. This could marginalize or obscure

the role of the agent. However, a fear-appraisal model doesn't emasculate the agent, it simply refines the conditions for agent's success in persuading the audience. Operating within the social and linguistic conditions which are likely to make a security speech successful, the so-called facilitating conditions, do not guarantee the agent's claims will be appraised appropriately. A fear-appraisal model still holds agents as a key part of securitization, it simply sets the bar higher for their success.

4. Securitization is still based in constructivist ontology

The Copenhagen School is firmly rooted in the constructivist tradition of contending that relationships of amity and enmity are socially constituted rather than the product of materially relations between groups (Buzan *et al*, 1998:19). The shift to a fear-appraisal model should not be taken as a rejection of basic constructivist ideas about the role of socially constituted beliefs in determining the politics of security. In fact, it is the social nature of ideas about the world which allows us transform appraisal theory from an individualistic (first image) approach, to a collectivist (second and third image) approach. AT holds that fear is a product of appraising situations, but the basic criterion that these appraisals rely upon can be socially constituted (Garcia-Prieto and Scherer, 2006).⁴⁰ Beliefs about what is threatening, what is personally relevant to one's goals, what may be potentially harmful, and what coping strategies may be available, are all socially influenced to some degree. When appraisal criteria are held in common, similar appraisals of fear can become common. This is the mechanism which allows us to see feelings of fear as a social phenomenon.⁴¹

⁴⁰ The key point of connection here is social identity theory (SIT). Both appraisal theory (Garcia-Prieto and Scherer, 2006) and securitization theory (Theillier, 2003) have been tied to SIT, suggesting the potential for a bridge between the two.

⁴¹ Another way of looking at this that an appraisal variant of securitization brings notions of social identity (in the Wendtian sense) closer to the forefront of securitization studies. Ideas about group identity are deeply implicated in dynamics such motivations and coping abilities. The situatedness of fear, and other emotions in identity, could

Differences

1. Existential Threat is no longer the center of gravity in the practice of securitization

In conventional models of securitization the concept of existential threat is at the centre of the analysis. Agents must communicate it, audiences must see it as legitimate, and security measures must respond to it (or at least allay it). In a fear-appraisal variant the center of analysis shifts to how the audience evaluates the claims of existential threat. In this view, a security speech act may possess all the social and linguistic conditions for success, as outlined in conventional approaches, and still fail at the point of audience appraisal.

2. A fear-appraisal model rejects the binary success/failure view held by conventional approaches

Appraisals do not operate in the binary fashion that characterizes the concept of existential threat. Within a given appraisal pattern the criteria can vary to different degrees, which in turn influences the intensity of an emotion. For example, suppose a family moves into a house next to you with a particularly menacing looking dog. You may have appraised the situation in manner that produces fear, but only to a very marginal degree. This marginal level of fear might be attributed to strong coping strategies you perceive as available to yourself, such as having a strong wooden fence surrounding your home. Then, one day, you notice a small opening in the fence – just wide enough for the dog to fit through – and your fear suddenly intensifies; your coping ability is no longer as strong as you thought it was. Relative shifts within appraisal criteria can lead to the intensification (or diminution) of emotions. The prospect of intensification suggests that the speech act can engender feelings of fear in an audience to varying degrees, including feelings of fear which exist below the register of existential threat.

serve as an important counter balance to the increasingly narrow focus on linguistics and semiotics in the study of securitization.

3. *A fear-appraisal model creates a more precise algorithm for explaining motivation in practices of securitization*

Taken together, the last two claims suggest that security measures could emerge from a speech act where the audience does not widely agree on the presence of an existential threat, but doesn't reject the agent's claims completely. An appraisal model therefore opens the possibility that the audience could reflect on claims of an existential threat and not fear for their survival, but nevertheless be concerned enough to see some kind of security measure as legitimately warranted. In this scenario the audience might view the issue as "worrisome/troublesome" or as a "risk" (Abrahamsen, 2005:59), but not as existentially threatening. New security measures could emerge without involving any "breaking of the rules" of normal politics (Buzan *et al*, 1998:26). An example of this might be the forming of a special parliamentary committee, or even new legislatively approved funding for a government body to investigate the nature of an emerging threat.⁴² There is insufficient space here to flesh out the implications of this argument. However, I would suggest that the ability of an appraisal model to account varying gradations of fear, which in turn produces a range of legitimacy for security measures, goes some ways to addressing the concerns raised by the 'bluntness' critique discussed above. An appraisal model of securitization could account for the existence of security measures which come into being without the presence of a broadly agreed to existential threat, and therefore can be seen as offering a more precise algorithm for securitization research.

4. *Fear appraisals can account for the broadening of securitization analysis to images and the televisual.*

⁴² A staunch supporter of conventional securitization theory might argue that these kinds of 'security measures' actually constitute a break from normal political practices and therefore fit into the mold of exceptional security measures seen within conventional approaches. This is simply hiding behind definitional and contextual vagueness about what constitutes political 'normality' and 'exceptional' measures. Legislative subcommittees and increased agency funding is a ubiquitous and fairly mundane fact of normal political life. These kinds of critiques involve a serious degree of what has been called 'ontological gerrymandering' (Huysmans, 1998c:494).

Securitization theory has been routinely criticized for failing to consider the role of alternative forms of media in security politics (Williams, 2003; Vuori, 2010; Moller, 2008). Invoking commercial advertising as a point of reference, some research has argued that images can convey affect which facilitates the audience's "purchase" of securitizing moves (Vuori, 2010:260). In this respect seeing is not only believing, but feeling as well. This kind of argument is compelling given the ubiquitous presence of images in media coverage of security issues (Williams, 2003:529), but is at odds with conventional approaches to securitization which see no explicit role for affect. Furthermore, the complexity and ambiguity of images makes it difficult to associate them with clear, discrete, and the ultimately binary meaning associated with existential threat (Moller, 2008:186-187). In sum, the role between imagery and the practice of securitization remains unclear.

Imagery will rarely communicate the entirety of the meaning of a securitizing move. A better alternative may be to examine how the aesthetics of security contribute to the different constitutive elements of a fear-appraisal. The use of AT to examine the relationship between affect and aesthetics is gaining some significant traction in the field of empirical visual studies (Silvia, 2005, 2006). Researchers who want to examine the role of imagery in practices of securitization may find that a turn to AT offers a fruitful research programme. However, simply using AT as a separate adjunct to securitization theory to understand how security images produce affect will be of limited utility. Acknowledging images are implicated in the production affect does not in itself tell us why affect is important to the practices of securitization. The only way to make the claim that security images produce affect intelligible, or even relevant, to securitization theory is if that theory has an explicit role for emotion in its explanation. What the

visual studies of securitization need then is an emotionally cognizant theory of securitization, which precisely the approach advocated here.

Responding to Critics

Securitization theory has demonstrated a remarkable degree of versatility and resiliency in the face of sustained criticism (Williams, 2003:524). Buzan and Waever still contend that the basic framework they developed more than a decade ago remains sound (2009:256). The discussion of the bluntness critique of above, including its limited traction, goes some ways to demonstrating this resiliency. It would be mistake to presume that the kind of theory restructuring suggested here could go unchallenged. This is all the more the case when employing AT, an approach which has garnered some significant criticism in IR (Mercer, 2010; Ross, 2006). It would therefore be beneficial to attempt to head off some of the criticism that might emerge in response to the approach being advocated here.

1. New evidence from neuroscience now supports the idea that emotion is not necessarily post-cognitive (Mercer, 2010:4;). In this neo-Jamesian view the experience of emotion is a physiological reaction. Emotion can be produced before any cognitive appraisal.

AT does not possess an explanatory monopoly on emotions, and this is something that it explicitly acknowledges (Roseman and Smith, 2001:16). It is eminently reasonable to argue that some physiological experiences, such as being injured, can evoke emotional reactions. Anyone who has seen a child fall and cry could agree with this proposition. The physiological experience of pain is deeply implicated in affect (Hutchinson, 2010). However, this observation does not discount the argument that emotions can also be elicited by cognitive appraisals.

Beyond the simple premise of explanatory pluralism, there are two serious misunderstandings within this critique. The first is that recent advances in neurosciences somehow categorically disprove AT. The reality is that the criticism of AT offered by

neurosciences is much more nuanced than as portrayed by critics such as Mercer. A more qualified view can be found in Ross:

“Joseph LeDoux and Antonio Damasio, for example, agree that emotions are appraisals of external stimuli, but disagree with the notion that such appraisals might be uniformly available to consciousness. LeDoux offers experimental evidence to suggest that emotions are part of an evolutionarily more sophisticated system of emotional appraisal that bypasses the relatively slower functions of the conscious mind.” (2006:202 emphasis added)

The issue raised here is not whether emotions are the product of appraisals, but at what level of consciousness these appraisals occur.⁴³ This claim is singling out approaches to appraisal which view it as a largely conscious, rational, and self-directed process.

This is where the second misunderstanding becomes apparent. The view that appraisals are largely self-directed, rational, and conscious processes is clearly at odds with the AT literature. Magna Arnold, who is considered the “founding mother of modern appraisal theory” insisted early on that an “appraisal is an ‘intuitive’ assessment of the ‘here and now’ aspects of situations and not a deliberative, rational process.” (Roseman and Smith, 2001:9) The literature is quite clear that appraisals can occur at both the conscious and the unconscious level. Examined from this perspective, the crux of Mercer’s critique depends on a particularly narrow view of cognition, defined as conscious, rational, and self-directed thought. This view does correspond to more nuanced view present in the literature, and therefore can be seen a misrepresentation of the appraisal approach.

2. Appraisal theory cannot account for the initial source of appraisal. Appraisals are evaluations of the desirability of certain situations, events, or objects, and involve adjudication between different value judgments. Because emotion is needed to give value to facts emotions are necessary part of the appraisal process (Mercer, 2010:4)

⁴³ Roseman and Smith actually agree with earlier research conducted by LeDoux arguing that appraisals may originate in the limbic system, far below the level of conscious processing (2001:7 endnote 2)

For Mercer the constitutive criteria that forms certain appraisals are all value judgments. Whether or not, for example, a situation is motivationally relevant to me, is based on a value judgment of its importance. As these value judgments are inherently emotional, emotion must precede the process of appraisal. The problem with this kind of ‘chicken-or-the-egg’ critique is that it presupposes a kind of linear causality that is simply not present in AT. Researchers often tend to view appraisals as part of a recursive or cyclical processes, where the outcomes of a previous appraisal can contribute to the next one (Scherer, 2001:372). Beliefs regarding things like motivational relevance or coping ability can be informed by previous appraisals. While the specific character of these recursive and cyclical models is still a major area of theoretical development, the view of linear causality that Mercer attributes to the field is not accurate.

Yet there is point of even greater significance to be made here, one that helps us understand the relationship between AT and securitization theory more clearly, while at the same time broadening our understanding of where appraisals come from. AT holds that while the cognitive processes (including both conscious and unconscious) are individual, the constitutive criteria that informs appraisals can be social (Garcia-Prieto and Scherer, 2006). This is to say that whether a situation is perceived as motivationally relevant, motivationally incongruent, as well as one’s coping abilities with respect to the situation, can all be culturally influenced.

An example from the securitization literature can help us better understand what is meant here. In *SFNA*, Ole Waever makes the point that to invoke the logic of security, one doesn’t have to explicitly say the word ‘security’. Depending of the context, the logic of security can implicated in variety of different words. Thus, in Holland, when one uses the term ‘dikes’ one automatically invokes the logic of security because that word conveys a particular sense of urgency and threat (Buzan et al, 1998:27). For those unfamiliar with this particular cultural

idiosyncrasy, the word ‘dikes’ is associated with threat and urgency in Holland due to the territory’s history of violent flooding and the enduring vulnerability of its low lying geography. Historical memories of flooding such as the ‘Watersnoodramp’, or the Flood Disaster of 1953, become part of common cultural memory and are passed on to new generations. It is at this point that the constructivist roots of securitization theory and AT meet. Younger members of Dutch society may equally fear flooding and be concerned about the role of dikes in Holland. They may be socialized to see the issue of flooding as both highly motivationally relevant and incongruent, with a low or weak coping ability as well. This evaluative criteria could synthesize into the core-relational theme of threat and produce a strong fear appraisal. Even though the person may have never subjectively experienced a major flood, they may well be socialized to appraise the issue of flooding, and by extension dikes, as a matter of threat warranting security measures. In this instance the value judgments which inform appraisal are drawn from social identity, the ‘dutchness’ of the individual. By showing that the value judgments upon which appraisal criteria depend upon are socially influenced we not only create a strong challenge to Mercer’s ‘chicken-or-the-egg’ argument, but we also suggest a key role for social identity theory in helping us understand appraisals.⁴⁴

3. Appraisal theory cannot account for rationality’s dependence on emotion. Revolutionary neuroscience shows that people who have the emotional centres of the brain damaged can no longer function rationally. Rationality depends on emotion (Mercer, 2010:5).

The appraisal model of securitization presented above goes some ways to illustrating the interplay between affect and reason in the process of securitization. Still, two issues should be

⁴⁴ One might be tempted to ask if appraisal criteria are subject to cultural variance, then is the formal structure of appraisals themselves open to cultural variance (i.e. might the appraisal for fear in one culture involve not motivational incongruence, but perhaps some other criteria?). Most appraisal theorists would argue no (Rosemand and Smith, 2001:17). By rooting the process of appraisal in evolutionary biology, AT makes the case that the formal structure of appraisals are universal. What this allows for is the extreme diversity in the substance of appraisal components, but not the formal structure of appraisals themselves.

considered in the face of Mercer's critique. First, it would be helpful to acknowledge Mercer's claim that rationality's dependence on emotion is part of his broader thesis that rationality and emotion are interdependent and not oppositional. When the latter proposition is considered, appraisal theory instantly becomes more amenable to Mercer's claims. For example, appraisal theorist Richard Lazarus has emphatically argued that the world needs to "shake off more than 2000 years of western thought" which saw "emotion as reified and entirely independent of reason" (2001:60). The divide between appraisal theorists and Mercer's position is not as big as he believes.

Second, assuming Mercer and AT agree that reason and emotion are intertwined, is Mercer's claim that AT does not see reason as dependent on emotion accurate? Put another way, is the causal direction of emotion and reason for AT only one way? There is evidence to suggest otherwise. Returning to the above discussion regarding cognition and the (un)consciousness nature of appraisals, sometimes appraisals can include deliberative cognition, what Mercer would call reasoning, and this can occur as part of the appraisal that precedes the emotion. If we adopt a position that deliberative cognition can be part of the appraisal process and we view appraisals as cyclical and recursive, then rationality becomes implicated, even intertwined in the broader appraisal cycle. Mercer's one way causality breaks down here, but in doing so, we can understand emotions and rationality as existing in the complex interplay that we have come to call appraisal. This also suggests to us that re-envisioning causality may be an important part of creating an appraisal variant of securitization theory. Fortunately, this is a conversation securitization theory is already beginning to have (Balzacq, 2005:192).

4. Cognitive approaches such as appraisal theory are unable to capture the depth and diversity of emotion in the discrete view of emotion produced by appraisals. The more visceral and inchoate dimensions of emotions are not coherently capturable by language.

Reducing emotions to discrete feelings or states of mind artificially narrows our understanding of them (Ross, 2006:201-203).

This is perhaps the most challenging criticism to deal with, especially given that this project focuses on the emotion of fear, where the diversity in its experience is difficult to understate. This is exacerbated by the fact that AT has indeed trended towards the classification of emotions (see for example Schorr, 2001). The essential concern can perhaps best be described as the reification of emotion. Here the treating of emotion as a tangible ‘thing’ shifts our understanding of affect from an elemental and complex human experience to a classifiable typology, or more vulgarly, a distinct and coherent form of behaviour. What is lost in the latter approach is the essential subjectivity of emotion, the deep and unique personal experience of affect. In this respect, any examination of emotion needs to account for ‘the goose bumps’⁴⁵ of affect, the rooted subjectivity that defines emotional experiences.

There are two possible ways to defend an appraisal variant of securitization from this charge. The first suggests a means, perhaps even a methodological strategy, to mitigate the challenge of affective depth and diversity. One way to capture the ‘visceral’ and ‘inchoate’ experiences of fear in these distinct contexts is to look at the non-verbal ways fear-appraisals are communicated. In this respect the turn to images, televisual, and in general aesthetics of securitization offers a promising means to understand how unique forms of fear are communicated.

Recall, in the above discussion on securitization and imagery, I suggested that imagery will rarely communicate the entirety of the meaning of a securitization move. A better alternative may be to examine how the aesthetics of security contribute to the different constitutive elements of a fear-appraisal. The argument I am now making here is essentially the reverse. No longer

⁴⁵ I am borrowing this phrase from Phillip Frowd.

am I only arguing that an appraisal model of securitization can help us understand security imagery, but that security imagery can help us understand or capture more of the security appraisal. Including security imagery in the analysis may go some ways to helping capture the depth and diversity of affect that is not always communicated effectively by a more formulaic model of appraisal. In this respect, it may be the case that an appraisal model of securitization and security image analysis are codependent, the former capturing the objective nature of affect, with the latter capturing the subjective nature of affect. Taken together, both approaches help us understand the intersubjective nature of affect and security.

The second response to the challenge of affective depth and diversity is not so much a methodological strategy, but rather a critical reflection what this challenge means. Put bluntly, very few researchers want an overly deterministic, objectified analytical model of emotion. Concern over the vulgarization of emotion drives researchers to want to focus on the intimate subjective experience of affect. I agree with this basic rationale, but want to suggest that it can be taken too far. This is to say that there is a significant danger in being overly focused on the subjective experience of emotion; the individual's 'goose bumps' one might say. The problem here is that leaning too hard to this approach obscures the *social* nature of affect in securitization.⁴⁶ To argue that affect is so deeply personal is to, in a way, remove it from the social realm. If affect becomes understood as having such incredible depth and diversity, then how can a people hold it in common? If feelings of love, loss, anger, humiliation, and so on are experienced in such diversity, can there be anything that we truly feel in common?

⁴⁶ This is the essential tension of Ross' (2006) work on emotions and constructivism. While Ross' attempts to strike a balance by arguing that emotions are "neither individual nor collective" (213), his emphasis on studying how the 'micropolitics' of affect signals a shift away from examining how emotions configure collective politics.

I would suggest the answer is yes. Social phenomenon such as nationalism are predicated on the widespread existence of feelings of love for a nation. The practice of securitization is no different. It depends on the fear produced in response to claims of an existential threat to be of a social nature. This is not to suggest that every individual member of an audience must experience the exact same feelings of fear in the exact same manner (i.e. the audience has a collective jump in blood pressure and all start perspiring at the claims of the securitizing agent). Rather, it is to say feelings of fear must be held in common at some level for an audience to be collectively motivated to see new security measures as warranted. By treating affect as overly personal we risk obscuring its social character.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to develop a variant of securitization theory that is fully aware of the role of affect in the practice of securitization. In doing so I have argued that conventional models of securitization obscure the role of affect, and that an appraisal variant can not only help us understand affect, but other key issues as well. These include instances of securitization where existential threat is not widely agreed to, but still produce some form of security measures, the role of rationality in the security speech act, as well the how the appraisal model can help us understand the role of security imagery.

A variety of complicated questions remain unanswered. How, precisely, do emotions such as love and humiliation function within the security speech act? What happens when these emotions enter hybrid relations? How are the emotions implicated in the politics of security transmitted via social identity and the process of socialization? What is the role of conscious versus unconscious appraisal for the audience in the security speech act? How does affect figure into the agent's own thinking and motivations? What does the internal debate amongst appraisal

theorists mean for this kind of bridge building project? In this respect, an appraisal variant of securitization theory can be seen as one small step towards a much broader and robust research agenda.

In this broadening of the research agenda the original intention of this project, the search for viable approaches to intervening in the language of security, may be lost. To reclaim this intention, the key task now becomes to situate an appraisal model of securitization in a manner that allows us to understand how certain normative interventions into securitization either succeed or fail. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5 – Securitization, Emotion, and Iraq

What does an appraisal variant of securitization theory look like in practice? How does the concept of cognitive appraisal change our analysis of a security speech act, and how they might be resisted? This concluding chapter seeks to draw together the theoretical insights of the previous chapters in the context of the empirical case of the United States' decision to invade Iraq in 2003. The analysis here is focused on a narrow subset of securitizing moves which occurred in the lead up to war, specifically the publicized debate between realist academia and neoconservative commentators over the nature of the Iraqi threat.

The perceived transformation of Saddam Hussein's Iraq from a weak state constrained by sanctions in 2002 to an imminent, existential threat with weapons of mass destruction in 2003 is frequently cited as an instance of securitization. Thus far, this body of research has focused on the role of the Bush government in securitizing moves leading up to the 2003 invasion (Hughes, 2007), the facilitating role of 9/11 imagery in the securitization process (Möller, 2007), the role of American commercial media in facilitating securitizing moves (O'Reilly, 2008), and the dynamics of securitization within the United Kingdom (Roe, 2008) and the European Union (Stahl, 2008). While this research has made great strides in mapping what is perhaps the most significant instance of securitization in the last decade of world politics, the related debate between realist academia and neoconservative commentators has received little attention from this perspective. Instead, reflection on the debate between these two groups over the use of force in Iraq has been limited to a handful of articles on IR theory (Williams, 2005; Schmidt and Williams, 2008; Lowbeer-Lewis, 2009).

The separation of these two bodies of research is puzzling for three reasons. First, securitization analysts typically focus on the role played by Bush administration officials as securitizing agents at the expense of neglecting the pervasive influence of neoconservative

intellectuals like Bill Kristol and Charles Krauthammer in American media, and their role in shaping the emerging Iraq War discourse (Ikenberry, 2004). If we take O'Reilly's (2008) claim seriously that domestic media played a central role in facilitating the securitizing moves of the Bush Administration then we should also reflect on the possibility that there were other functional actors within the media complex who were engaged in similar acts. Not only were neoconservatives a major source for rhetorical arguments for the securitization of Iraq (Ikenberry, 2004; Williams and Schmidt, 2008:193 and Lowbeer-Lewis, 2009:78), they also actively participated in security speech acts themselves. Second, given the dominant status of realist academia in the American IR community (Peterson et al, 2005), it is curious how realist critiques of neoconservatism vis-à-vis the Iraqi threat failed to sway the public debate in any measurable way. While Critical approaches to security (Krause and Williams, 1996; Hansen, 1997; Buzan, 1997) make much of the intellectual dominance of realism, the apparent inability of this hegemonic tradition to influence the public debate over Iraq should give all IR scholars cause for concern and force academia to reflect on its ability to influence public policy (or, from a securitization perspective, the ability of academia to influence the outcome of a securitizing move). Third, with the exception of Möller (2007), securitization case studies of the 2003 Iraq War present an incomplete and over-determined view of the securitization process. By failing to examine sites of resistance to security speech acts, of which the realist critique of neoconservatism is but one example,⁴⁷ such research presents the securitization process as incontestable. While one should be careful to not frame the neoconservative-realist debate as *the*

⁴⁷ Realists were not the only IR academics against the War in Iraq. In a survey 80% of American IR academics said they opposed the war on the basis of their expert opinion (Peterson et al, 2005:39). Nor was academia the sole source of resistance to securitizing moves; consider the role of former Ambassador Joe Wilson in contesting Iraq's alleged purchase of yellow cake uranium and subsequent the Valerie Plame incident.

pivotal point of resistance, ignoring such sites of resistance gives an unduly pessimistic view of securitization in general, as well as an inaccurate empirical picture of this case.

This chapter argues that these inadequacies can be addressed through the application of an appraisal securitization framework. The argument starts from the premise that Iraq was successfully securitized in the domestic American political discourse in 2003, but that this process was contested. One of the forms this contestation manifested in was realist academia's resistance to the security claims of neoconservatives. I argue that while the debate between realist academia and neoconservatives can easily be understood within securitization framework, the analytic cannot ultimately account for the failure of realists to sway American public opinion and desecuritize Iraq. Instead, we must go beyond the social and linguistic conditions which constituted the neoconservative speech act and understand how it was implicated in triggering certain patterns of appraisal, and in turn feelings of fear. By turning to the dynamics of appraisal we can better understand the impotency of the realist's strategic critique of neoconservative claims.

This chapter proceeds in four stages. The first stage of this chapter works to isolate the key parameters of the debate which allow us to see it as an instance of contested securitization. This involves assessing the realist critique of neoconservative claims and examining how we can understand realist academia as 'intervening agents'. The second stage of this article then examines why realist resistance to this security speech act failed. Here I argue that while theoretically, realists were in a strong position to turn the 'facilitating conditions', the linguistic and social parameters which make or break security speech acts, against neoconservatives, this was not the case empirically. Following this, I assess two non-securitization perspectives from the literature on the realist/neoconservative debate and demonstrate why they are equally

problematic. The third stage of this chapter turns to an appraisal variant of securitization theory to explain the failure of realists to influence the Iraq War debate, emphasizing the integral links between appraisal, emotion, identity and the values-based rhetoric of neoconservatives. The final stage of this paper briefly examines how this analysis contributes to ‘lessons learned’ for intervening in the language of security and how realists might re-approach the security claims of neoconservatives in the future.

Realism and the Contested Securitization of Iraq

The framing of Iraq as an existential threat in 2003 relied upon multiple lower level processes of securitization that included rhetorics of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and humanitarian violations (Hughes, 2007). In this respect, the 2003 Iraq War, as a manifestation of the broader Global War on Terror, can be seen as an instance of *macrosecuritization*; a process which aggregates and subordinates lower level securitization processes to a broader and more over-arching theme (Buzan and Waever, 2009:257).

This chapter is not concerned with the macro-level dynamics of the securitization of Iraq in 2003 which is often the research focus. Instead, it focuses on smaller subset of dynamics; namely the resistance of realist academia to the Bush Administration and neoconservatives’ portrayal of Saddam Hussein’s regime as an existential threat. To clarify how the focus of this analysis differs from previous securitization research it is helpful to contrast the two approaches in the matrix below.

Figure 1 – Conventional Securitization Theory and the 2003 Iraq War⁴⁸

Parameters	Realist-Neoconservative Debate	Macro View (i.e. Hughes, 2007)
Securitizing Actors (Who made claims about the existence of existential threats?)	The Bush Administration and neoconservative political commentators	Primarily the Bush Administration

⁴⁸ This table is adapted from Atland and Bruusgaard, 2009.

Audiences (Who needs to be convinced of existing existential threats?)	The American Public and Congress	The American Public and Congress
Object of threats (What was claimed to be threatened?)	A Saddam Hussein Regime armed with WMDs, associated terrorist networks	A Saddam Hussein Regime armed with WMDs, associated terrorist networks
Subject of threats (What was claimed to be threatening?)	Humanity in general, American population specifically	Humanity in general, American population specifically
Suggested 'emergency measures' (What countermeasures were advocated?)	Preventative War	Preventative War
Intervening Actors (Who contested the claims of the securitizing actors?)	Realist academia	N/A

The key differences between these two levels of focus are the functional actors involved. By looking at the micro or sub-level dynamics of the securitization of Iraq we can identify a broader set of actors, including intervening actors which allows us to map contested security speech acts. This group of actors is the focus of the current analysis.

By 'realist academia' I am referring to a group of American individuals who engaged in public criticism of the neoconservative rationale for war, and articulated this critique from within the conceptual framework of political realism.⁴⁹ A representative sample of this group include the IR scholars who were signatories to the public advert in the *New York Times* in September of 2003 which argued that war with Iraq was not in America's national interest. This advert, which was coordinated by Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer (Lowbeer-Lewis, 2009:83), featured a series of senior realist scholars including Robert Jervis, Michael Desch, Robert Pape, Jack Levy, Randal Schweller, Jack Snyder, as well as the godfather of structural realism, Kenneth Waltz.

The *New York Times* advert was not the only instance of this critique; similar critiques appeared

⁴⁹ It is important to note that there are two tracks of critiques in the literature: one is the broader realist critique of neoconservative thought and its axiomatic principles, such as the value it places on the democratic peace thesis and its desire to link national interest to universalistic moral principles; the other is a more specific critique of the rationale for war in Iraq. See Schmidt and Williams, 2008:201-207.

in a variety of other venues (Betts, 2003; Mearsheimer, 2002; Mearsheimer and Walt, 2003a-b; Snyder, 2003).

Schmidt and Williams (2008:207-209) outline three general arguments within this critique. First, realists take issue with the characterization of Saddam Hussein as a 'serial aggressor' who represented an imminent danger. Of the two wars Hussein had previously drawn Iraq into, Iran in 1980 and Kuwait in 1990, Iraq was supported by the West in the former, while the latter was the result of a serious communications failure between the United States' Ambassador and the regime. Second, they questioned the evidentiary basis for weapons of mass destruction, while at the same time suggesting that even if such weapons did exist, Hussein's use of them could be prevented by the same logic of deterrence which prevailed during the Cold War. Third, realists were skeptical of any substantive links between Saddam Hussein's regime and terrorist groups, citing the leader's penchant for self-preservation and the immense retaliatory risks of giving WMDs to uncontrollable terrorists groups. From the realist perspective, the threat of Iraq was largely overstated and the previous policy of vigilant containment could successfully continue (Schmidt and Williams, 2008:209).

From a securitization perspective, this was a direct contestation of neoconservative security claims. By drawing into question the aggressive tendencies of Saddam Hussein, his willingness to use WMDs, and the links between Iraq and terrorist groups, the function of the realist critique was to disaggregate the issue of Iraq from the meaning of existential threat. By minimizing the danger and immediacy of the threat represented by Iraq, realists worked to discursively reshape the issue and contest the characterization given to it by neoconservatives. It is important to note that realists *did not argue that Iraq posed no threat whatsoever*, but rather that it did not constitute a threat which required shifting from the longstanding policy of

containment to a more radical policy of preventative war (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2003:). From the securitization lens, realists were arguing that Iraq did not represent an existential threat requiring exceptional measures, and that there was no need to shift from the normal politics of managed containment.

What makes realists stand out from the broader opposition to the securitization of Iraq? Why might they be considered as having a greater chance at being intervening agents compared to any other group? To answer this question we have to turn to the original understanding of securitizing agent. If, according to conventional securitization theory, agents make their case by leveraging the ‘facilitating conditions’ in which the speech act is contextualized, then an intervening agent should logically be someone who leverages these same conditions for the opposite purpose. These agents must rely on their own use of grammar, social capital, and the nature of the threat to obstruct a security speech act.

If securitizing agents make their case by employing a ‘grammar of security’ where they “construct a plot with an existential threat, no return, and a possible way out” (Buzan *et al*, 1998:33), then the intervening agent must be someone who can poke holes in this plot. They must be someone who can question the securitizing agent’s use of the language of security (i.e. Is this really an existential threat? Is there really no point of return? Is there only one way out?). Realists, whose entire profession is based upon scrutinizing so-called ‘objective’ security claims, should be ideal for this role, if for no other reason than their intense familiarity with the language of security makes them effective critics of security claims. One way to measure the strength of this proposition is to look at how well realist academia were able prevent critical and alternative approaches to security studies from emerging in mainstream IR. For a significant period of time during the Cold War and beyond, realism was able to subordinate alternative grammars of

security (i.e. environmental security) through a series of disciplinary practices which painted new viewpoints as unserious or unscientific (Walt, 1991; Krause and Williams, 1996; Buzan and Hansen, 2009).⁵⁰

The issue of realist academia and social capital (feelings of public trust) is much more mixed. There are reasons to believe that realists suffer from a paucity of public trust. Realists like John Mearsheimer have argued that “American political culture is deeply liberal and correspondingly hostile to realist ideas.” (2001:402). Although academics are often seen as expert authorities, and therefore trustworthy, neoconservatives frame these credentials as a liability by treating realist intellectuals as part of broader academic elite that is out of touch with the American public (Schmidt and Williams, 2008:218). Additionally, as social capital is a relative measure between speakers, one could argue that neoconservatives have distinct advantage in terms of public trust given their close association with the White House; the social capital enjoyed by the White House in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 simply spilled over to their close intellectual associates.

These arguments however, may be overdrawn. For example, public opinion research has suggested that the American public is just as sympathetic, if not more so, to realist ideas than liberal internationalism (Drezner, 2008:63). While neoconservatives may try to frame academic credentials as being ‘elitist’ and ‘out of touch’, the securitization literature emphasizes the importance of expert authority and knowledge in constituting and disciplining the security discourse (Aradau, 2004a:394-395). Finally, the argument that neoconservatives enjoy a significant advantage in social capital vis-à-vis their close relationship with the White House is

⁵⁰ Indeed, Hans Morgenthau’s original formulation of the ‘national interest’ was intended as a conceptual tool to differentiate from America’s core interests (i.e. defense of territory) from being conflated with broader moralistic concerns (Schmidt and Williams, 2008:202).

complicated by the fact that public trust in the American government, including the executive branch, has precipitously declined in the last 40 years, never returning to levels once seen in the 1950s (Keele, 2007). In sum, realists do not enjoy any clear advantage in social capital in comparison to their neoconservative interlocutors, but is it highly questionable whether they are grossly outmatched.

Finally, there is the issue of the nature of threat. Are realists in a privileged position to contest the nature of the threat brought forward by their neoconservative interlocutors? Here realism's strong reliance on historical record proves an asset. One of the most effective critiques put forward by realists is that the security claims of neoconservatives are not supported by historical record, and that the nature of a threat needs to be understood historically. As Walt and Mearsheimer argue:

“The belief that Saddam's past behavior shows he cannot be contained rests on distorted history and faulty logic. In fact, the historical record shows that the United States can contain Iraq effectively – even if Saddam has nuclear weapons – just as it contained the Soviet Union during the Cold War.” (2003a:52)

By tracing the historical development of threats, the realist critique is able to identify what it sees as sharply inflated threat perceptions: when existing dangers increase despite prevailing social, economic, political and material conditions. A comparative historical perspective draws out the tension between framing something that has traditionally been a manageable threat, like the Saddam Hussein regime, and rapidly shifting it into the category of an existential threat. By drawing on an established, some might even call hegemonic, history of international security realists can effectively and authoratively contest the nature of the threats raised by their interlocutors.

If the quality of an intervening agent is measured by their ability to turn the facilitating conditions of a speech act against a securitizing agent, then realist academia should theoretically

emerge as a prime candidate to challenge the security claims of neoconservatives. Yet despite this strong position to contest neoconservative security claims, multiple public opinion polls consistently put support for the use military force above sixty percent from January 2003, up to and including the invasion in March (AEI, 2008:3-4).⁵¹ Polling also showed that the public largely (70-90%) believed the Bush administration's claims about WMDs, and that Iraq would eventually attack the United States (Kaufmann, 2004:30). While Congress had overwhelmingly voted to authorize the use of force earlier in 2002, this position never changed in the lead up to war in 2003. Why then did the realist critique fail to measurably influence the public debate over Iraq?

The Failure of Securitization Theory and Alternative Explanations

Conventional securitization theory and its understanding of the success of security speech acts as determined by the 'facilitating conditions' cannot explain why realist academia failed to influence the public debate over Iraq. To explain this failure requires a broadening of the analysis to include alternative theoretical perspectives. But before turning to an appraisal variant of securitization theory it is worthwhile to assess two other potential explanations. One looks at public salience; whether or not realist academia had enough of a presence in the public discourse to even make a significant impact. The other, offered by Schmidt and Williams (2008), suggest the realist failure can be attributed to a much more comprehensive neoconservative critique of liberal modernity, and a subsequent reconfiguration of realism's concept of the 'national interest' to reflect the prevailing political and cultural values within the American public.

In Chaim Kaufmann's analysis the American public's support for the use of force in Iraq was the result of a 'failure of the market place of ideas' in foreign policy, and that this can be

⁵¹ Curiously, support for the use of force declined without the backing of the United Nations. This may suggest that acceptance of claims of existential threat may be tied to broader views within the international community.

attributed in part to the inability of academic experts to mount a united critique and to achieve sufficient media coverage (2004:45). While realist academia did offer a united critique, the question of whether or not it received sufficient coverage is certainly debatable. If Hans Morgenthau once admonished realists to ‘speak truth to power’ (Williams and Schmidt, 2008:209), then we should reflect on the obvious proviso of how loudly one has speak to be heard. As speech actors, the presence of realist academia in the public discourse was dwarfed by the much larger media presence of neoconservatives. In the 12 months leading up to the Iraq War Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer, two individuals who could be considered at the forefront of the realist critique, only published two public articles contesting the rationale for war (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2003a and 2003b). In comparison, prominent neoconservative Bill Kristol wrote or co-authored no less than eleven op-ed articles making the case for the Iraq War.⁵² Neoconservatives already had a distinct advantage in shaping the public discourse given their long established presence in public magazines and newspapers, as opposed to more insular academic journals (Williams, 2005:308). In contrast, IR Academia is a professional discipline structured by incentives to publish in highly specialized and technical journals, most of which are “impenetrable” to outsiders (Walt, 2005:38). To draw on the theatrical metaphor of securitization: if neoconservatives were professional actors, then IR academics were only amateurs, and it is no surprise the former came to dominate the center stage.

The problem with this explanation is that it risks simply tying public saliency to having a prolific message. Here the claims of a speech actor are assumed to be salient to the public when they appear in broad array of media and are consistently repeated (O’Reilly, 2008:70). While this analysis does not seek to diminish the importance of achieving this kind of ‘critical mass’ in

⁵² See Kagan and Kristol, 2002a-e, 2003a-b; Kristol, 2002, 2003a-b; and Schmitt and Kristol, 2002. Obviously, there are differences between publishing in the New York Times and the Weekly Standard, but this sample still clearly captures the prolific character of Kristol’s writings.

the public discourse, it overlooks the importance of tailoring one's message to achieve a high degree of resonance with an audience. Some messages become prolific by virtue of possessing an innately attractive character; viral videos and marketing are an excellent example of this as they propagate by their own repetition from one group to another by virtue of their ability to capture an audience's imagination (Dobele *et al*, 2005). Any explanation of the failure of the realists' message cannot be solely attributed to structural imbalances in the media, it must also incorporate a deeper analysis of the message itself.

This is the approach adopted by Schmidt and Williams in their analysis of the Iraq War debate. Rejecting a narrow focus on the "sense of emergency" following 9/11, or the "closeness of neoconservatives to individuals in positions of power", the authors turn to the ways in which neoconservative rhetoric drew upon powerful social and political undercurrents within American society (2008:210). At the center of this process is the neoconservative appropriation of the concept of the national interest. Rejecting the realist notion of a national interest as determined by a "narrowly strategic material calculation", neoconservatives argued that any vision of the national interest must be anchored in some form of shared values (212). In this view all social and political orders built solely upon forms of rational, egotistical self-interest are unsustainable as they deprive societies of any enduring sense of purpose beyond imminent, individual desires. Not only does this make it difficult to develop popular support for any kind of long-term, resource intensive foreign policy such as the Vietnam War, it leads to a kind of internal decadence and political decay (214). In this formulation a society's ability to act abroad with a clear sense of purpose, in this case the purpose of espousing democracy and fighting 'tyrannical' and 'evil' regimes, is tied to the moral health of the domestic political order. The domestic

public interest becomes tied to the foreign national interest in a mutually supportive and “virtuous circle” (215).

The result of this approach is that neoconservatives create a much more pressing problem than simply one dangerous dictator with WMDs – the problem then becomes fear of an internal political and moral decline. Here Schmidt and Williams’ quotation of neoconservative Victor Davis Hanson is particularly acute:

“In an era of the greatest affluence and security in the history of civilization, the real question before us remains whether the United States— indeed any Western democracy—still possesses the moral clarity to identify evil as evil, and then the uncontested will to marshal every available resource to fight and eradicate it.” (“Iraq’s Future—and Ours” in ed. G. Rosen, *The Right War*, 16–17, quoted by Schmidt and Williams, fn 91)

For neoconservatives, Iraq is a real and imminent existential threat to America’s safety, but it pales in comparison to the more enduring existential threat of an American Republic devoid of moral purpose. For Schmidt and Williams, this is what gives the conservative message its unique strength. In drawing a ‘homology’ between the foreign and domestic, and tying it to the need to maintain some view of social virtue, neoconservatives can draw upon a rich repository of rhetorical, political, and cultural undercurrents that already exist in American society, more commonly known as the ‘culture wars’ (216). This is why neoconservative claims received such strong support among certain constituencies, like the religious right, where questions of morals and values are central to political life (217).⁵³ The debate over the Iraq war is not just about strategic interests then, but the nature of American identity. The reason realists failed to sway the debate, to desecuritize Iraq, is because of a failure to engage with this identity, and the ability

⁵³ Evangelical Christians remained among the steadfast supporters for the war, and this continued even when general public opinion began to turn against the mission (Froese and Mencken, 2009:104).

of neoconservatives to turn it against them by arguing that liberal academic elites were out of touch with American values (219).

The strength of Schmidt and Williams analysis is that it goes beyond the simple issue of public salience and examines the formative context of the realist/neoconservative exchange itself. It is true that neoconservatives had a prolific presence in the media, but this presence was largely predicated upon the attractiveness of their message and how it engaged with core themes in American culture. The corresponding weakness of Schmidt and Williams' analysis is that they never explicitly states why values and identity matter in shaping the politics of security. While they make a strong argument that it was values and identity which determined the outcome of the realist/neoconservative debate, they never provided any explanation as to why these factors outweighed the strategic rationale suggested by the realists. This is a byproduct of not linking their analysis to any broader theory of security. Consistent reference to 'mobilizing' rhetorics and symbols (2008:194,214,219) suggests a discursively performative force is associated with invoking values and identity, but no explanation is drawn out beyond this. To fully understand why values and identity hold such sway over the politics security we have to look at how they are integral in engendering emotion, especially fear.

Appraisal Theory and the Realist/Neoconservative Debate

Appraisal theory offers an explanatory bridge between securitization explanations which focus on the discursive dynamics of the realist/neoconservative debate, and the Schmidt and Williams explanation which focuses on the role of values and identity. An appraisal approach suggests that security performances are more effective when they draw upon emotions, especially fear, and that emotions are configured by values and identity through the processes of cognitive appraisal.

This analysis starts by suggesting, as implied by Schmidt and Williams, that there actually two distinct patterns of appraisal elicited by neoconservative security claims. The first appraisal pattern is the portrayal of Iraq as an existential threat. This is a narrative which portrays the issue of Iraq as something that is motivationally relevant, motivational incongruent, something that cannot be easily coped with, and that can best be summarized by the core-relation theme of threat. The content of this appraisal pattern is outlined in figure 1, and bears close resemblance to the appraisal pattern identified by de Castella *et al* in their analysis of Australian Prime Minister John Howard's speeches on terrorism (2009:8).

Figure 1

Motivational Relevance	Maintenance of territorial integrity, protection of American life
Motivational Incongruence	Serial aggressor regime with WMDs and access to terrorist networks
Coping Ability	Perceived vulnerability to terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11
Core-relational theme	Saddam Hussein is a threat

This appraisal pattern can be easily related to the realist critique. With regards to motivational relevance, realists did not contest the premise that the maintenance of territorial integrity and the protection American life were important. They did however, contest the degree of incongruence Saddam Hussein's regime represented for this goal, as well as the extent of America's pre-existing coping ability. These arguments came in the form contesting the regime's characterization as a serial aggressor, as well asserting the belief that the logic of deterrence of would prevent any use of WMDs. Here it is important to highlight a critical weakness in the realist strategy: perceptions of an individual or society's coping ability with a threat are situated in social memory (see chapter 4, page 102-103). While neoconservative security claims framed America's vulnerability from within the lens of 9/11 (Schmidt and Williams, 2008:201), realists attempted to counter this with a much older and degraded memory of the Cold War and nuclear

deterrence, which for many Americans including senior policy makers and political elites is a memory that is rapidly fading.⁵⁴

The addition that Schmidt and Williams suggest, and that appraisal theory can incorporate, is that the security claims of neoconservatives actually worked to elicit a second distinct appraisal. This appraisal pattern is found within the neoconservative narrative on the need for a virtuous American foreign policy as outlined in figure 2.

Figure 2

Motivational Relevance	Virtuous political order based on spreading American values
Motivational Incongruence	A vision of national interest based upon parochial, egotistical self-interest
Coping Ability	Lack of will to act abroad (i.e. dithering, going ‘wobbly’)
Core-relational theme	Failure to act abroad itself is a threat

Any kind of engagement between the above realist critique and this appraisal pattern is absent.

As Schmidt and Williams note, realism’s long-time focus on rationalism and parsimony has left little space for any analysis of values, leaving the “field open to largely uncontested exploitation by neoconservatives who did think long and hard about these questions and made them crucial parts of their analytic, rhetorical, and political platforms” (2008:210). With some exceptions from Snyder (2003), the realist critique published before the conflict failed to engage with the issue of values at all, instead it overwhelmingly focused on the strategic calculus of the United States in attacking Iraq (e.g. New York Times, 2003; John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, 2003a-b; Richard Betts, 2003). The crux of the issue here is that traditional strategic concerns were not the sole factor responsible for eliciting feelings of fear vis-à-vis the threat of Iraq. Instead, the subjective feelings of fear which broad portions of the American public experienced were the product of cognitive appraisals, appraisals which were anchored to essential features of American identity, like the need for a political order based on the unifying values of American

⁵⁴ See for example Secretary of Defense Robert Gates’ (2011) recent comments on the inability to sustain NATO as a security institution without policy makers possessing the formative experiences of the Cold War.

exceptionalism and the remaking of the world in America's image. It wasn't only fear of Saddam Hussein's regime which drove the process of securitization, it was also fear that there would be a lack of will to confront the regime.⁵⁵

These dynamics can be summarized in the following narrative. The prewar Iraq debate consisted of a complex constellation of securitizing moves and counter-moves in the American public discourse. Key contributors to this dynamic were neoconservatives and their realist critics. Neoconservatives security claims were framed in a manner which emphasized the danger and vulnerability of the country posed by Saddam Hussein's regime, but also the related danger of an American public devoid of moral purpose unable to confront dictators; although realists challenged the first proposition, albeit problematically, the latter went virtually uncontested. When the public were exposed to these claims through various media, distinct patterns of appraisal were activated. In the case of the threat of Saddam Hussein's regime to the country the decisive factor was how memories of 9/11 influenced the public's perceptions of coping ability to deal with external threats. At the same time neoconservative anxieties about the moral clarity of the United States sharply resonated with an American identity which held values like American exceptionalism and democratization as having the utmost motivational relevance. In response, these appraisal patterns generated significant levels of fear in the American public, both of the Iraqi threat and the danger of America not acting. It was these fears which legitimized the exceptional security policy of preventative war among broad cross-sections of the American public.

This analysis then goes beyond conventional securitization theory, by demonstrating that the realists' failure was not principally because of an inability to meet certain social and

⁵⁵ One clear example of this dynamic is in the titles William Kristol adopted for his articles leading up to the Iraq War. Titles like "Lost in the Wilderness", "Back on Track?", "Going Wobbly?" and "Axis of Appeasement" all capture the central thematic of indecisiveness and lack of will at the core of neoconservative security claims.

linguistic conditions, but rather that their failure can be attributed to a lack of engagement with the cognitive appraisals that were ultimately responsible for engendering feelings of fear. Similarly, this explanation goes beyond Schmitt and Williams' analysis by integrating their conclusions on the importance of identity in determining the debate to a more holistic vision of security politics where values and identity engender feelings of fear, and that such feelings are integral to the audience's acceptance of a speech act.

Lessons Learned for Intervening in the Language of Security

How should the outcome of the realist/neoconservative debate inform how we think about intervening in the language of security? If we can identify, with greater specificity, why realists failed in contesting neoconservative security claims, what kind of advice might we impart on similar attempts at intervention in the future, whether they are led by academic experts, political elites, policy makers, diplomatic allies, or even civil society?

The first and most obvious point from above is public salience. While not identified as *the* central determinant of whether an intervention into a security performance is successful, it is difficult to ignore the role relative obscurity played in blunting the realist critique. For security academia, this means reassessing the relationship of academia to public policy and examining the ways in which the insights of IR can be brought to the public security discourse. For Stephen Walt this involves a "conscious effort to alter the prevailing norms of the academic IR discipline" which can be achieved by giving greater weight to publications focusing on real world problems, creating professional incentives to participate in public policy and government positions, and having academic journals giving greater publishing weight to timely issues (2005:41-42). Walt's own professional development embodies this shift toward the public security discourse with his recent online blog at *Foreign Policy* (2009). More collective efforts

can be seen at the level of academic public advocacy groups like *Security Scholars for a Sensible Foreign Policy*, as well the broader *Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy*.⁵⁶

Still, as the analysis above demonstrates, having a well organized and far-reaching message in the public security discourse may not be enough. Any attempt to intervene in the language of security must take into consideration how social context and identity configure the appraisal patterns which are the basis of a public's collective fears. An emotionally sterile critique of security claims that is averse to incorporating values into its rhetoric is likely to fail. Instead, attention should be turned to how pre-existing resources within a given social identity can be used to complicate appraisals or change the terms of reference entirely. Intervening agents need to leverage the possibility that alternative social identities can be invoked to complicate existing appraisal patterns, or activate new ones. One example can be found in the framing of American intervention abroad as an exercise in Empire building. In this perspective, interventions into regimes like Saddam Hussein's Iraq are to be feared because 1) they are incongruent with a collective desire to have the world to see the United States as a benevolent and non-expansionary world power, and 2) that the United States possesses poor coping abilities to deal with the animus caused by imperial policies, such as drone strikes overseas. A view of American identity rooted in an aversion to empire building is not nearly as prolific as one anchored to the idea of American exceptionalism and righteousness employed by neoconservatives, but it offers an emotionally compelling alternative that goes beyond a narrow strategic critique. Emerging elements of this strategy can be seen in Jack Snyder's (2003) critique of neoconservatism as propagating 'myths of empire', as well as in popular American politics with politicians such as Congressman Ron Paul (2007). This strategy inverts the process

⁵⁶ See for example <http://www.sensibleforeignpolicy.net/> and <http://www.realisticforeignpolicy.org/static/000024.php>

of securitization by making the security measures originally advocated for, such as preventative war, the object of the audience's fears.

A cautionary note is appropriate here. This project does not seek to develop one single, comprehensive practice for intervening in the language of security. Indeed, any such project would be problematic given that the concepts of securitization and appraisal cannot exist beyond the realm of abstraction without the necessary social context. Instead, this project offers a much more modest proposal, where inquiries into how to intervene in a given instance of securitization begin with an analysis of the patterns of appraisal at play. While the substance of a securitization can take on many forms, so too can differing patterns of appraisal; the social, linguistic, and psychological analysis here only suggests a starting point for developing more specific practices of intervention.

Conclusion

Military interventions abroad in the name of security have become a touch stone for debates about international and domestic politics. Much less discussed is the idea of intervening in the language of security, the language which relies on tropes about threat, danger, and the need to act all costs to mobilize political power. Securitization theory has provided a powerful analytical tool to understand the social and linguistic construction of security, as well as a strong normative impetus to pursue practices of desecuritization. The weakness of this analytical framework however is its inability to engage with human emotions, especially fear, and theorize about how this changes the approach's original descriptive and prescriptive analysis.

This project may be considered too radical in its tendency draw together disparate and emerging research agendas, many of which go against more orthodox positions within the discipline of IR. This concern can be blunted by contextualizing some of these ideas within

broader well-established research trends. Securitization theory, for example, has become an intense site of research, both theoretical and empirical in the last decade, and its continuing resiliency to criticism has earned it a distinguished position within the field of security studies (Buzan and Hansen, 2009:212-217). As Emanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot (2011) have recently pointed out, IR has a long established (albeit often implicit) research focus on the *practices* which constitute world politics, rather than on isolated material and ideational factors, and this includes the foundational works of security studies such as Thomas Schelling's seminal work on bargaining. Securitization, and any attempts intervene in it, are simply different forms of practice in world politics. Normative analyses which seek to remake the concept of security for political purposes have long been a distinctive feature of the security widening debates since the 1990s, with approaches such as the Aberystwyth School leading the way, even explicitly criticizing the Copenhagen School's anemic normative engagement (Booth, 2007:163). While presuppositions of rationality and the subordination of emotion continue to some degree to dominate IR and security studies, the research agenda calling for a more explicit consideration of emotion began over a decade ago (Crawford, 2001). This field of research has developed to the point where even the most positivistic research programs can no longer sustain the view that emotion is, or should be, subordinate to rationality (Mercer, 2006). The value-added contribution of this project is to draw together these disparate research agendas in a novel manner to examine an important question: how can we intervene in the language of security?

Finally, it is crucial note the important corollary of this research question: *when* should we intervene in the language of security? When is securitization morally acceptable? The position of the literature, with few exceptions (Floyd, 2007), is that "security should be seen as a failure of normal politics" (Buzan *et al*, 1998:29) and any attempt to securitize an issue should be

minimized. However, the finding that emotion and appraisal are at the core of the practice of securitization complicates this position. Here the relationship between Carl Schmitt and securitization theory once again becomes relevant, especially the formers' view on vitality and authentic human life (Williams, 2003:fn 30). For Schmitt the feelings and enmity and amity which drive the practice of securitization are essential to a vital and authentic human life, one which cannot be found within the sterile, rationalistic Liberalism of modernity. This project finds a different basis for a similar conclusion: the reason practices of securitization can be so successful is because they are so deeply dependent on appraisal and affect, which in turn are fundamental to what it means to be human. Being audience to a securitization creates a space for a vivid and visceral embodiment of emotion, a space which Schmitt would argue is rare given the hegemonic dominance of Liberalism. If emotion is integral to social, political, and cultural life, and the practice of securitization offers the most vivid opportunity for its embodiment, then the case for categorically being against securitization is severely complicated.

This however, should in no way be taken as an approval of a fascist security speech act, the kind intimately associated with Carl Schmitt. The practice of securitization can be directed to an indefinite number of ends. One potential alternative identified by Williams is in what Judith Shklar has termed the 'liberalism of fear' (Williams, 2011:5-9). In this formulation a Liberal political order, viewed here as commitment to a politics defined by rules and procedure, can be developed out of a cultural and institutionalized fear of the concentration of power, especially within the state. This political order inverts the typical dynamics of securitization by arguing that the real existential threat to a society is the breaking of its own rules. While this example is not without its own problems (what kind of rules should a society fear breaking?), it does open the door to the possibility of a normatively desirable form of securitization.

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