

○ VOLUME 13 NUMBER 2, 2014

Empire's Walking Dead: The Zombie Apocalypse as Capitalist Theodicy

Stefan Dolgert
Brock University, Ontario

*The zombie apocalypse is now such common currency that the American Center for Disease Control has enlisted it, tongue-in-cheek, in its campaigns to raise preparedness for pandemics (presumably of the non-zombie variety). What explains the rise of this once-niche horror genre to cultural prominence? Reading *The Walking Dead* in conjunction with the employee self-help manual *Who Moved My Cheese?* (WMMC?, hereafter), I argue that the zombie apocalypse genre employs an updated version of the becoming-subject under capitalism. Like the 'little people' of WMMC?, the zombie apocalypse hero (ZAH, hereafter) must engage in brutal sacrifices in order to survive: the ZAH must kill their recently-zombified loved-one before (it) can kill or zombify them. I argue that this killing is better seen as a double-murder, directed both against the ties of affection that thwart capital's circulation, as well as against the bourgeois subject's past, which capitalism constantly seeks to obliterate from memory. As with the worker-mice of WMMC?, the ZAH must forge a new identity based on flux rather than stability. The zombie apocalypse thus explains the modern subject to herself, through a mythic depiction of the internal disposition that capital demands from its increasingly deracinated workers. Without the tendrils of affection or the roots of a past, the subject is left sufficiently destabilized to be tractable to the pressures, dislocations, and anxieties of global capital.*

*'The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on
the brains of the living'
(Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*)*

The Walking Dead narrates the odyssey of bands of surviving humans in the American South in the wake of a 21st century zombie apocalypse, and is the most watched dramatic program in American

cable television history.ⁱ In what is perhaps its most notable scene to date, midway through the third season, the show's female lead (Laurie) dies in childbirth.ⁱⁱ Laurie's death is not particularly noteworthy, in a sense, since many important characters have already died in the series to this point (zombie apocalypses have a way of doing this), but the manner of her death is striking: she is shot in the head by her tween-aged son Carl after delivering her new baby. In the imagined universe of the series Carl's deed is justified, since a) Laurie has just given birth by Caesarean section, performed by another character with nothing but a knife; b) Laurie will surely die, since there are no sutures available to close her open wound/womb and zombies are roaming nearby; and finally c) all humans are known to be infected with a virus that will resurrect them as a flesh-eating zombie post-mortem (regardless of whether they have been previously bitten by a zombie). Carl shoots his mother as she seemingly lies dead (but not resurrected yet), as a final act of love in order to save her from returning from death (zombies can't reanimate if their brain is destroyed).ⁱⁱⁱ What the audience learns later is that, in fact, Laurie was still alive when Carl shot her, since her body is subsequently devoured by a roving zombie (and zombies don't eat other zombies), meaning that Carl actually killed his mother.^{iv} Now, while in a Georgia prison where the dead walk again this is a reasonable action, I am interested in the millions of spectators, in the United States and across the globe, who view this program now, and who presumably enjoy viewing it without actually being subject to the tragic decisions forced by a zombie apocalypse. What exactly do viewers get from watching other (fictional) humans, quite sympathetically portrayed at that, hunted so mercilessly that they are forced to murder their own mothers, sisters, and daughters? To put it bluntly: is there something wrong with a culture where ordinary citizens take pleasure in such spectacles? What political subjectivities are revealed, congealed, or constructed through the witnessing of such spectacles? Are these new passion plays redolent with emancipatory energies, as we ponder our own post-apocalypse in the wake of the Great Recession, or do they cement the already-existing subjectivities associated with the global flow of capital? I will discuss these questions in relation to William Connolly's meditation on the promise of speed as a modality of resistance to capitalism (in his *Neuropolitics*) later in the essay, but in order to flesh out the political implications of *The Walking Dead* I need to first situate the show in the contemporary landscape of zombie-criticism.

Academics love their zombies as much as the average consumer of mass media, it seems, so there is no shortage of alternatives as to how we might answer these questions. Perhaps surprisingly, however, there is a near-universal consensus in the secondary literature that the 'zombie moment' is actually something of a hopeful portent, rather than being a sign of cultural degradation or exhaustion. Most of these conventional approaches blend political, economic, psychoanalytic, and cultural critique, and argue either a) that zombie narratives are psychologically useful because they allow the audience to confront its fears in a safe venue, or that b) they serve as a

powerful means for the immanent critique of advanced capitalism (and of course sometimes both of these perspectives are amalgamated in some way). As to the first style of interpretation, there are many candidates for what modern audiences acutely fear: fear of death, fear of embodiment, fear of desire, fear of the nonhuman bases of the human (Kristeva 1982), fear of the persistence of power (Sutherland 2007), fear of the loss of/lack of meaning in the world (Lauro and Embry 2008; Zani and Meaux 2011), fear of the big Other, and finally, fear of consumer capitalism (Muntean 2011). Sarah Lauro argues that zombie films, and the participatory 'zombie walks' to which they have given rise, allow viewers to experience catharsis through viewing the spectacle of traumatic events onscreen.^v This is particularly important since the global recession of 2008, which threw many into financial chaos and outright penury, and zombie 'events' have become immensely popular in the wake of this catastrophe. Though the empirical evidence is not entirely definitive, it seems that those who have experienced this social trauma obtain a measure of relief by experiencing dramatic trauma virtually (Kinnard 2013).

This psychological outlet is primarily a 'benefit' that accrues to individuals, though one might argue that there are important social ramifications that are not necessarily beneficial, depending on your perspective on the justice of the current global political economy. Still, those writers who stress the psychological aspects of zombies tend to view the trend (and the participatory audience response) in a favorable light (Collins and Bond 2011). So too do the second group of scholars I mentioned above, those who contend that zombies are potential resource for the cultural critique of capitalism. While the origins of the *zonbi* in Haitian folklore are steeped in the master/slave relation of the Caribbean plantation and not in the dynamics of late capitalism, zombie mythology has morphed substantially, especially since 1968 (McAlister 2012). George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* of that year fundamentally changed the direction of the genre: Romero intended his movie as an indictment of American racism and militarism, and his subsequent three films, *Dawn of the Dead*, *Day of the Dead*, and *Land of the Dead*, extended the critique to capitalism itself in its commodity fetishism, mindless consumerism, and predatory individualism (Clark 2010). While this explicit criticism of contemporary society is easy enough to see in Romero's films (and a host of subsequent imitators), since it is almost always the case that the living humans are more dangerous to each other than are the zombies, there is little in the way of a positive alternative vision besides vague notions of communitarianism (Murray 2010) or the promise of a liberation from our repressive society (Clark 2010). However, critics like Sarah Lauro and Karen Embry see even greater potential in the zombie, arguing that a kind of 'zombie manifesto' has been issued in these films that poses a radical challenge not just to capitalism, but to the humanism upon which it is based (Lauro and Embry 2008). While they are inspired in part by Donna Haraway's 'A Cyborg Manifesto', Lauro and Embry claim that zombie-posthumanism cannot be represented, as such, since any attempts to render a positive program end up presuming the bourgeois subject

whose centrality is being denied. The 'manifesto' is therefore something akin to a negative dialectic, *a la* Adorno, so that the zombie-path to the future is not so much via a new political program as it is the suggestion that the posthuman must come from outside the bounds of our current language and symbolic forms (Lauro and Embry 2008).

The zombie moment would appear a fecund one, then, for those critical of the capitalist and humanist consensus, and yet there is something a bit too celebratory in all of this cultural critique. I would not deny the importance of the direct challenge Romero and others (Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later* and Kevin Gates's and Michael Bartlett's *The Zombie Diaries*, especially) pose to consumerist individualism, though one might quibble about the effectiveness of such a critique on materially relevant structures of power.^{vi} But my concern is distinct from this. I wonder instead if what is going on in these films is something quite the opposite of what most critics presume, that instead of the promise of a new kind of anti-capitalist, egalitarian embrace of difference, the zombie apocalypse genre serves to reinforce the hegemonic ideology of late capitalism. I shall explore this suggestion by examining the intertextual connections between *The Walking Dead* and the classic 1990s worker-self-help book by Spencer Johnson, *Who Moved My Cheese?* As I will detail later this book, which ranks among the top fifty selling books of the 20th century, enjoins its readers to accommodate themselves to the ever-changing demands of the contemporary workplace by revealing their deficient thinking patterns.^{vii} The take-home message is that those who adapt themselves to the new working conditions—layoffs, downsizing, forced moves cross-country, new skill requirements, etc.—will thrive, while those who pine for the old ways will perish. *WMMC* stands as the second most popular economic self-help text of the century, behind only Napoleon Hill's 1937 *Think and Grow Rich*, and is, arguably, the crystallization of 'the new normal' disposition expected of workers in the post-Fordist global economy. By reading the television show and book together we will see that the ideal worker called forth in Spencer Johnson's text looks remarkably similar to the protagonists of *The Walking Dead*, which casts doubt on the notion that there is a generalized de-stabilizing function enacted by zombie apocalypse fiction. While some films may indeed challenge the dominant notion of bourgeois individualism, the most popular contemporary work in the zombie aesthetic, *The Walking Dead*, instead serves to shore up a subjectivity that is subservient to capitalist imperatives. By translating the psychological trauma of the workplace into a mythological register onscreen, it legitimates this form of subjectivity by simultaneously distancing itself from the everyday concerns of the American worker (no one refers to capitalism or the recession in the program) while also reflecting these traumas in a naturalized format. The metaphorical quest for survival in *Who Moved My Cheese?* (in which no one actually dies) becomes a daily struggle for survival in *The Walking Dead*, as both minor and major characters are relentlessly killed by the zombies or predatory humans in nearly every episode. The basic lessons of both texts are

taught through analogous depictions of temporality, affect, familiarity, and memory, and the concatenation of these fields leads to the same lesson: your connection to your past will kill you. Killing your attachment to your loved ones is the only way to survive in the new world.

The Flight from the Past into the Future

I want to begin with some general observations on the relation between temporality and affect under late capitalism. What concerns me, primarily, is the way that the future tense has tended to displace the present and the past, and that this displacement tends to shift dominant modalities of affect from love (or, affection more broadly) to anxiety, and dominant modes of motion from slow to fast. Many theorists have noted this dynamic, described by Sheldon Wolin thus:

the temporalities of economy and popular culture are dictated by innovation, change, and replacement through obsolescence ... Culture can seem like war because culture is increasingly attuned to the tempos of fashion. Fashion shares with war a certain power: it forces disappearance. Fashions are evanescent, wars are oblitative. Each is in the business of replacement. Fashion produces new music, dress forms, new language or slogans. (Wolin 1997, p. 6)

While theoretical accounts of the causal mechanisms diverge, most theorists acknowledge the consequences, as William Scheuerman summarizes:

Modern capitalism's structurally-rooted drive to reduce turnover time and accelerate the course of economic life for the sake of improving profitability undoubtedly constitutes a key feature of modern economic life; a number of studies—Marxist and other-wise—confirm the existence of an intimate relationship between capitalism and social and economic acceleration. Making effective use of ever more rapid forms of production and consumption is a proven strategy for business people to maintain profitability and defeat competitors; and capitalism's built-in tendency to speed up economic processes manifests itself in myriad ways ... the social and economic acceleration of contemporary society includes the heightened tempo of everyday life, according to which substantial empirical evidence points to an objectively-measurable intensification of activities that we nowadays engage in during a given unit of time. We eat, walk, and talk (or at least communicate) faster than most of our predecessors; we also manage to pull this off even though we typically sleep less than they did. (Scheuerman 2002, p. 2)

I am primarily interested in the way that these social tempos are experienced at the level of the individual consciousness, as subjects must accommodate themselves to increasing their physical rhythms as well as adopting cognitive habits that can negotiate the fast pace of material and informational turnover. One strategy that now

characterizes contemporary subjects at the habitual level is a disposition of intense anticipation, whereby subjects project their consciousness increasingly far into the future as a means of managing the proliferation and acceleration of threat (Adams et al. 2009; Massumi 2010). The net effect of this heightened anticipation is that the future becomes the primary modality of temporality, as the past is deemed increasingly irrelevant and the present loses its substance in the quickening drive into futurity. As a product of these changes in social tempo, then, subjects now project themselves into the future at an accelerating rate, altering the nature of their affective connection with those identities that had previously constituted them in the past.

Cheese is a Metaphor ... not just cheese!

Spencer Johnson wrote the insouciant *Who Moved My Cheese?* in 1998, as speedy flows of global capital were radically re-shaping workplaces and workers, even as Wall Street indices skyrocketed to ever-new records. The book is actually three nested stories (much like a Platonic dialogue), with an introduction by Kenneth Blanchard purporting to tell 'the story behind the story'; a framing story ('One sunny Sunday in Chicago, several former classmates, who were good friends in school, gathered for lunch ...') in which one of the group, Michael, relates 'a funny little story ... [that] changed the way I looked at change' (Johnson 1998, pp. 22-23); and then the 'story' of the cheese itself. 'The Story of Who Moved My Cheese?' signals its intended status as a fairy tale or parable from its opening: 'Once, long ago in a land far away, there lived four little characters who ran through a maze looking for cheese to nourish them and make them happy' (Johnson 1998, p. 25), and narrates the tale of two mice ('Sniff and Scurry') and two 'littlepeople' (mouse-sized humans), 'Hem' and 'Haw'.^{viii} It will surprise no one that each character behaves in a manner appropriate to his name, but it is also important for the reification performed by the story that it is the mice who are the exemplars for the 'littlepeople', and not vice versa.^{ix} All four characters are accustomed to getting their cheese from a single location in the maze where they live, but one day the cheese disappears. Sniff and Scurry immediately head off in the search for 'new cheese', since they're hungry and there is nothing else to be done about it. The littlepeople, however, are disabled by their capacity to reason—since cheese had magically been provided at the old 'Cheese Station C' they expect that if they wait long enough it will show up again. Furthermore, they are fearful of exploring unknown sections of the maze, and Hem in particular resents that he should have to move at all, since he was comfortable with the cheese formerly provided. Eventually Haw realizes that he must leave his comfortable (but empty) Cheese Station, and after some tribulations in the maze he finally stumbles across the new source of cheese that Sniff and Scurry had long-since found, 'Cheese Station N'. With a new supply of cheese he can relax for a bit, but he is also prepared to resume the search once the cheese at N begins to dwindle. He has left clues for his friend Hem to find, should he too seek out the new cheese, but the

story leaves open the question of whether Hem ever mustered the courage to look for new cheese.^x

The fable's 'cheese' is more than just cheese, of course, representing a dizzying combination of wish-fantasies that varies by character: 'material things ... enjoying good health ... developing a spiritual sense of well-being ... feeling safe, having a loving family someday, and living in a cozy cottage ... becoming A Big Cheese in charge of others and owning a big house' (Johnson 1998, p. 34). 'Cheese' stands in, essentially, for anything that might conceivably be a source of happiness, from basic goods like health and family to larger life projects (where we seek power, safety or transcendence).^{xi} The emptiness of Cheese as a signifier is important, since it allows Johnson to elide any substantive discussions of what constitutes a good life for his 'littlepeople' (and us). Cheese is just whatever makes you happy when you think about it—there is absolutely nothing special about the particular attachments that a subject might have—which becomes crucial to Johnson's educative project *vis a vis* Hem and Haw. It is not just that Cheese is subjective—*de gustibus non est disputandum*—but that our attachment to one particular vision of happiness is arbitrary and, Johnson suggests, potentially infinitely malleable. Whatever your prior version of Cheese there is nothing really special about it, such that it cannot be replaced with a New Cheese that will be potentially even 'better'.

Johnson wants his readers to see the pathology in Hem's attachment to his particular notion of Cheese. The substantive content of Hem's happiness is not important, but rather his claim to have a right to it: "Why should we change?" Hem asked. "We're littlepeople. We're special ... we're entitled ... We're entitled to our Cheese" (Johnson 1998, p. 38). Hem does not want to venture out to look for 'New Cheese' because he believes that someone else is to blame for the lack of Cheese. The deep implications of the text's basic message are never spelled out, but instead are obscured by vague ideas of 'change' and 'Cheese'. The most obvious of the latent meanings are provided by the frame story, as the friends variously reflect upon the ways that they have responded to change in their lives, particularly change in the workplace. While Michael never explains *why* 'change' was so important or what he actually means by it in the context of his business, he indicates that the Hems and Haws of his office didn't want to change their behavior, and that those who would not change were fired (Johnson 1998, p. 86). The mantra of change also applies explicitly to relationships, and can either mean that 'bad' relationships should be let go, or that it is merely one's behavior that is bad and that 'New Cheese is a new relationship with the same person' (Johnson 1998, p. 88). In either the office or the home, then, Johnson alleges that individuals are performing poorly, but are too fixed in their old behaviors to fully embrace new strategies that will improve their 'performance'. But while the frame story's interpretation gives the reader a basic lesson in how to think about improving utility to one's employer, recall that Cheese as earlier defined refers to much more than how assertively one follows up leads on a cold-call list. If Cheese

is material comfort, power, social status, health, spirituality, or familial love (Johnson 1998, p. 34), then the real force of Johnson's (implicit) lesson is that these things, so fundamental to one's happiness that they even form the core of one's life-project or identity, can be exchanged or swapped for other versions of happiness and that it is *subjects* who are to blame if they become resentful in the face of this forced change.

Among the Walkers

The Walking Dead evinces many traits of the typical zombie apocalypse: a virus of unknown origin kills humans and then reanimates them (in part: they don't breathe or have a beating heart); the reanimated corpse feeds off of other living beings, preferably humans; the virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected zombie; civilization has been largely wiped out by the spread of the virus; wandering bands of humans attempt to stave off the zombie hordes while scavenging food and searching for remaining traces of civilization; and most importantly, family members are forced to flee from or kill their recently zombified relatives. For Sarah Lauro this last element is 'the definitive aspect of the zombie—the uncanny encounter with the unfamiliar, the terror from the familiar (especially when it is a family member) made unexpectedly different' (Lauro 2011, p. 232). *The Walking Dead* is especially focused on this final theme, basing the narrative of the second and third seasons in Rick killing Sophia and Carl killing his mother Laurie. To survive in the post-apocalypse of *TWD*, then, one must cut oneself off from one's intimate past lest that past turn fatal.

The denial of the past is not simply something that is enacted once and for all in *TWD*, but instead a scene of constant trauma as characters must choose between those they formerly loved and their survival in the moment. The narrative foregrounds not only these tragic choices, as when Laurie, Sophia, and Amy are killed, but cements the necessity of their death by including an explicit counter-argument to the prevailing kill-your-zombified-past theme. All of Season Two at Herschel's farm (where Rick's band attempts to begin a stable life anew) lies under the sign of this counter-argument, though Rick's band does not realize this until relatively late in the season. What they do not understand is that Herschel and his remaining family members have been keeping a mini-horde of zombies captive in their barn, because Herschel believes that they are still humans rather than zombies and that a cure may be found to return them to their former status. Herschel denies the denial of 'living' status to these creatures in part because his wife is among their number and he cannot bring himself to kill her, and in part out of a general denial that the state of the world is fundamentally altered. Herschel's desire to live in the past, to treat zombies as if they are somehow still a part of the human community (he even provides them with food by tossing them live chickens to devour), gives the audience the time to pause and reflect upon the gruesome practices which

have, by late Season Two, become the norm. While Rick believes Herschel is too traumatized by his wife's transformation to think rationally, he cajoles his group into respecting Herschel's wishes to keep the zombies in the barn in deference to Herschel's hospitality in allowing the group to stay on the farm. But while the audience is likely to hear Herschel's plea that the zombies are 'people I believe can be restored' (S. 2 Ep. 7) in the same light as Rick does, as a kind of irrational fantasy, they are able to consider in wish-form the possibility that these barn zombies present. They can ask: 'how *could* we live with our past in this new world? Can we maintain, in altered form, those attachments to the old, the familiar, the hopes and dreams that we had previously grounded our identity?'

At the level of explicit argument Herschel and Rick's group are deadlocked; Herschel's beliefs are decisively refuted, however, by Shane's precipitous assault on the barn, which releases the zombies and necessitates that they be killed before they can feed on the survivors. What cements this refutation of Herschel's attachment to the past, however, is that Sophia, Carol's daughter, is the final zombie to emerge from the barn (who is then mournfully shot in the head by Rick). The search for the missing Sophia had consumed much of Season Two, and had also spawned its own set of arguments about the wisdom of endangering the remaining survivors by searching for a little girl in a vast wilderness of abandoned homes and roaming zombies. Herschel's failed-fantasy of the return to the past is thus combined, narratively, with the quest for Sophia, transforming that search retrospectively into the same fool's errand to cling to a past that is now well and truly dead. Now the implicit meaning of all the failures through Season Two comes to consciousness, as Rick's dogged determination to find Sophia is revealed to have been as fruitless an obsession as Herschel's zombie barn. Now both projects are revealed as the immature longings of men who deny the reality of a changed world.

Shane, Rick's former subordinate but now rival (for the affections of Rick's wife Laurie), had laid out the implicit theme of the series in his conversation in the woods with Rick as they search (once again) for the missing (and already-zombified) Sophia: 'It's like we're old folks. All the people in our stories are dead' (S. 2 Ep. 5). To Rick's rejoinder that they cannot simply forget the dead, Shane replies:

Yes we can. It's hard enough accepting what's happened without digging up the past. I'll tell you what it is: nostalgia. It's like a drug. It keeps you from seeing things the way they are, and that's a danger when you've got people depending on you ... What're we doing? You've got every able body at your disposal scouring these woods for a little girl we both know is likely dead ... Survival, Rick. It means making hard decisions ... It's math, man. Alive or not, Sophia, she only matters to the degree in which she don't drag the rest of us down ... If we'd just moved on, man, we'd be halfway to Fort Benning right now, and Carl wouldn't have gotten shot ... (S. 2 Ep. 5).

All of what mattered 'before'—obligations to family, tradition, a life whose stability was based on maintaining ties between past, present and future—all of that is now an obstacle to the one thing that matters: survival. This simple 'math', as Shane puts it, is all the more powerfully taught to the viewer because, in the moment of its utterance, it is explicitly refuted by the narrative in that episode. Rick already suspects Shane's motives (indeed, he can read Shane's desire to 'kill' Laurie's pre-apocalypse marriage to Rick in Shane's comments), and Shane has been shown to be a deceitful character who has selfishly killed someone (Otis, a resident of Herschel's farm) in order to make good his escape from attacking zombies. So the advice to forget the past comes from a disreputable source, and Rick argues passionately against Shane's cruel logic. Shane does not respond to Rick's counter-challenge, and so they continue looking for Sophia.

It is only two episodes later that Shane's argument finally bears fruit, after Shane's afore-mentioned assault on the barn of zombies kept captive by Herschel. His actions appear insane, as he frees the zombies to attack the survivors, forcing them to make a choice in the moment between 'nostalgia' and 'survival', as he yells: 'Rick, it ain't like it was before. If y'all wanna live, if you wanna survive, you gotta fight for it' (S. 2 Ep. 7). But only after all of the zombies are seemingly dead, and Herschel, broken by the liberation from his illusions, stares vacantly, does director Darabont drive the final lesson home. Lingeringly, the camera follows the tiny sneakers of a last zombie as she shuffles out of the barn and shields her eyes from the sunlight—Sophia, the one the band has been looking for, has found them instead—and it is now clear that Rick has all along been as deluded as Herschel. He accepts this responsibility and kills Sophia as her mother Carol watches, carrying out in actuality what Shane had already suggested must be acknowledged by moving on from the farm. The past is dead, and will kill you if you do not kill it first—the only thing that matters is surviving into the future.

Season Two's fantasy of stability—the possibility of remaining on Herschel's farm indefinitely—comes to its overdetermined close shortly after Sophia's second death, as a horde of zombies finally overwhelms the paltry defenses of the survivors and forces them to flee into the wilderness (S. 2 Ep. 13). As if Sophia's death were not enough to cement the connection between nostalgia and death, the flight from the farm returns the viewer to Shane's earlier comments about the paramount need for mobility. Staying in one place is a sure recipe for being overrun by the slow-moving but persistent zombies, so any attempt to survive the apocalypse by fleeing from the affective ties of the past must also include the adoption of physical mobility as an ethical imperative. Speedy movement must be the post-apocalyptic subject's constant mode as well as its empty goal.

Like the mice and littlepeople of *Who Moved My Cheese?*, the living humans of *The Walking Dead* cannot allow their affection for their

past lives or their past loves to persist into the present, lest it destroy their future (recall the 'writing on the wall' from *WMMC?*: 'If You Do Not Change, You Can Become Extinct'). Like change in *WMMC?*, the zombie outbreak in *TWD* has no specific origin (and again: 'They Keep Moving The Cheese'). It arises as mysteriously as the ubiquitous change that eliminates the Cheese at Cheese Station C, and there is nothing for the survivors to do but react to the radical alteration of their situation. The zombie threat forces Rick's band into a life of constant mobility, like the mice and littlepeople's life running through the maze in unending search for Cheese (and again: 'Move With The Cheese'). Finally, only by projecting themselves into the future through intensified anticipation can Rick et al. and Haw, Sniff, and Scurry, hope to have any possible life at all ('Imagining Myself Finding New Cheese Even Before I Find It, Leads Me To It'). While *WMMC?* explicitly (and unapologetically) talks about life under capitalism as akin to a rat's life in a laboratory maze, the options in *TWD* are just as foreclosed as bounded despite the fact that the survivors roam the open roads of America.

Apostles of Speed

If we now ponder whether the double paean of *WMMC?* and *TWD* to futurity, mobility, and the liberation from the past may serve to enmesh the contemporary viewer in the net of hegemonic ideology, we might wonder how this potential entrapment should bear on recent theoretical attempts to embrace the emancipatory logic of 'speed'.^{xii} The 'metaphysician of speed', Paul Virilio, maintains a conflicted relation to the effects of the 'information bomb' on contemporary politics, though on balance he seems inclined to find it lamentable rather than celebratory. The information revolution has eliminated space through the acceleration of time, which is another way of saying that with the proliferation of information technologies events are becoming increasingly instantaneous. This push toward simultaneity renders thought increasingly obsolete, as careful weighing of consequences and alternatives requires more time than is now allowed for making a decision, since it is not only information that is near-simultaneous, but also threats as well. Catastrophes loom ever closer on the horizon, causing subjects (and politicians) to gaze upon the future with a mixture of palpable anticipation and anxiety—deliverance or doom may come in a flash either way. So the modern subject lives now in the era of the 'war machine', though in his later writings Virilio seems to acknowledge that much of what he decries is now a kind of built-in condition of contemporary existence (Virilio, 1986; Zurbrugg 1996). Only by exploring its virulent dangers can we hope to draw upon any of its more salutary potentials, though on balance he still seems inclined to focus more on the deleterious consequences (thoughtlessness as a social trait) rather than the benefits.

William Connolly has taken up Virilio's challenge, but I am more interested in his attempt than Virilio's because Connolly looks to

speed as a resource for anticapitalist politics rather than a source of lamentation.^{xiii} Connolly accepts that the increased pace of life characterizes late capitalism, but seeks to tease out latent Nietzschean possibilities in this new world: 'when the pace of life accelerates, nature ceases and becomes art ... people readily become more 'cocky', experimental, improvisational ... more democratic and less fixed and hierarchical ... more alert to how 'accidents, moods, and caprice' have already shaped them' (Connolly 2002, p. 157). The main point seems to be that a faster paced life, where one lives in an ever-vanishing present that is more essentially attuned to the future because one recognizes the contingency of the past, is also significantly linked with the rise of character traits that we readily associate with democracy. My worry, however, is that the general contours of this Nietzschean education also resemble the most salient aspects of the lessons learned by Haw in *Who Moved My Cheese?* and Rick et al. in *The Walking Dead*.

While it would be facile to equate Connolly's Nietzschean ethos of aesthetic self-transformation too readily with Johnson's hymn to embracing 'change', I want to comment here on a resonance or two between these seemingly opposed frameworks that may be more than ephemeral. Connolly worries about the ways in which modern subjects are painfully shoe-horned into ready-made positions that rely on fixed, hypostatized notions of identity, especially those that deny the self's agonistic indebtedness to those it considers 'other' to itself (Connolly 2002, p. 163). There is certainly something troubling about this, particularly since it often results in selves who cannot negotiate the challenges that arise to their identity without experiencing anger and resentment, which they almost inevitably channel toward those groups of 'others' (racialized others, gay/lesbian others, female others, trans others, etc.) who seem to most threaten their established truths. Against this fixed notion of the self, Connolly proposes a self that is disposed to re-creating herself constantly through promiscuous contact with those outside her known boundaries, especially in frenetic encounters in new constellations of accelerated temporality (Connolly 2002). Now while there is something to be said for speed and the unknown future as a solvent to racist or heteronormative certainties, there is also something that sounds vaguely like 'New Cheese' in Connolly's program. New Cheese is less about the payoff, the substantive new source of happiness for the 'littlepeople', and more about the need to imagine the existence of this new source of identity and then move oneself in that direction. It is about inventing, out of whole cloth in some cases, a new source of identity that will become the (temporary) lodestone of the newly emergent littleperson self. Both Johnson and Connolly seem to think that selves are better off when they abandon the past, the given, those drives and objects of desire they have been thrown into, in favor of an imagined future that is largely the self's aesthetic creation. Instead of traditions and attachments that push an already constituted self from behind into the future, Connolly and Johnson want to pull the self into being, through acts of imagination that do not have any particular object, content or goal. And while a self who maintains some critical distance between

herself and her identity is certainly laudable (lest she become enraged when identities emerge in her proximity that she cannot assimilate), it also seems that selves like Connolly's are apt to be colonized by a Johnsonian makeover. Capitalist firms likewise want selves who are unattached to the past (to what they loved or attached to in that past), who do not become resentful when challenges to their identity emerge, and who can comport themselves flexibly to an unknown future by creating fantastic ideal-images of the new person that they may (yet) become in that future. Johnson does not say whether this new identity is actually one that exists only in the performance of seeking this new ground for its home, but the text implies that no New Cheese can ever fully satisfy the self, and therefore that selves must live in the constant disposition to move on to something new. But that is the same thing as saying that what makes them happy is the constant pursuit of an always-deferred happiness, and this starts to sound something like Connolly's project.

To be clear, I am not saying that Connolly's preferred self is the same as the Johnsonian self, but rather that Connolly's self is (perhaps) insufficiently defined enough (because that would fix it, reify it) to fully resist the temptations offered by the New Cheese version of radical self-creation. Of course there are worlds of difference between the substantive self that Connolly would prefer and the idiotic human *doppelganger* conjured by Johnson, but the formal analogies between the two visions, and the lack of content to Connolly's, makes for a self who is more easily overwhelmed by capital's ability to overlay its desires ('accept and adapt to change when we want you to') onto the tabula rasa of the fluid self. Connolly is not wholly given-over to speed, mobility, and futurity, of course, and he is careful to note that there are dangers attendant upon his embrace of 'a fast pace of life' (2002, p. 162), but the weight of his argument depends on the benefits of accepting our newly speedy life rather than fighting against it.

Conclusion

Since zombies are merely (rotting) bodies with a barely functioning brain they are the ultimate tabula rasa, waiting as empty vessels to be filled with whatever content a theorist might choose to provide them (Sutherland 2007). As I have suggested, however, the particular presentation of the zombies in *The Walking Dead* suggests that they are not the harbingers of a new, posthuman, anticapitalist order, or even that they represent the barest critique of the horrors of life under capitalism. Instead, Frank Darabont has created a zombie epic that is not so much a meditation *upon* capitalism as a homily for how to live *under* capitalism. By projecting the psychic and social trauma of life after the Recession of 2008, where one must be ready to give up everything except one's bare life in order to be suitable for the 'flexible' working conditions that now obtain, *TWD* reconciles the ways of the market to man. To live now, it urges its viewers, is to live with the constant tragic choices forced upon Rick and his band. The

challenges workers undergo on a daily basis—depression from job loss or chronic underemployment, deteriorating physical health due to workplace stress, alienation from friends and family due to forced mobility, etc.—take on a mythological status as they are translated into a fictional setting (Rudisill and Edwards 2002, Gallo et al. 2006, Ali et al. 2013, Vadoros et al. 2013).

This translation doubles back upon the audience, however, now engendering a possible complacency towards the contingent political and economic configuration. Viewers are potentially socialized into a new identity by watching Rick and the others navigate the horrors of the post-apocalyptic world, since the plot of *TWD* offers solutions to the dilemmas faced by workers in their everyday world. They may be, in effect, learning a kind of tragic wisdom as they watch the suffering onscreen: a capitalist *pathei mathos*^{xiv} that reconciles them to the 'reality' of their new circumstances.^{xv} This reconciliation is far deeper in *The Walking Dead* than in *Who Moved My Cheese?*, perhaps in part because the writing in *WMMC?* is so stilted that few could be gulled by its verisimilitude whereas *TWD* is executed skillfully and seems grittily realistic (odd as that is given its genre). I would argue that differences in content, however, go farther in explaining the differences in effect: *WMMC?* still relies on vague fantasies rooted in desire, while *TWD* substitutes a fear of death made more pervasive by the persistence of anticipation as one of the dominant modes of affect under late capitalism (Adams et al. 2009). Buoyed, no doubt, by the booming economy of the Clinton years, *WMMC?* solicits the creation of new, fantastical objects of desire to draw out the reluctant Hems and Haws, urging them to dispense with their resentment against change and replace it with the fetishized (and essentially empty) future. This stimulation of desire is of limited use, however, when the economy spins in free-fall as it did in 2008. Workers were threatened with the immediate dissolution of their contracts, or mortgages (or both), and it is difficult to urge someone to imagine how wonderful New Cheese can be when their life is miserable in the present. *TWD*'s tragic perspective is far more suited to the post-Recession era, where mere survival is about the best that can be hoped for.^{xvi}

My reading of the television series suggests that hegemony percolates down through complex virtual channels that employ affect in the creation and maintenance of system-supporting subject positions. Viewers who think of themselves as Carl or Andrea will have little tolerance for what they take to be the delusions of their co-workers or fellow citizens who oppose the 'change' that magically appears—whether it be in the form of layoffs, more hours for the same (or less) pay, de-certification of union representation, fiscal austerity measures (whether instituted by governments or firms)—since the origin of such changes is as hidden from them as it is from Rick and Herschel, from Hem and Haw. The crisis is here—the Cheese gone, the zombies at the door, the economy in tatters—and so the only thing that matters is to change and survive, or die. The Carls of our new world who take upon themselves the brutal responsibility to murder

that which they love, in the name of survival, will not be disposed to work in solidarity with labor activists, or immigrants' rights groups, or feminists. The progressive political agenda looks like the whining of the resentful, at best, or the ravings of the delusional, at worst, and there is little reason to seek common cause with the weak or the insane. Indeed, the most ethical thing that a Carl can do is to shock the delusional out of their fantasies, as Shane does in Season Two, but this shock is achieved by way of a violent confrontation that nearly leads to the deaths of humans as well as zombies.^{xvii}

My suggestion, then, is that the popularity of *The Walking Dead* indicates that now is not a propitious time for taking Connolly's 'wager' that 'it is more possible to negotiate a democratic ethos congruent with the accelerated tempo of modern life than it is to either slow the world down or to insulate the majority of people from the effects of speed' (2002, p. 162). The ethos of engagement that Connolly intends to solicit is vitiated by very real alterations that capital makes in its subjects on a daily basis. The twenty-six million who read *Who Moved My Cheese?* are consciously working to accommodate themselves to the perceived demands of the economy ('If You Do Not Change, You Can Become Extinct'), while viewers of *The Walking Dead*, to the extent that they accept rather than reject the mythical structure of the narrative, unconsciously attempt to escape from their working lives by means of entertainment that reinforces these very same neoliberal self-help messages. While Connolly is certainly right to be concerned that attempts to slow the world down will either be totally ineffective, or effective only in cementing identities prone to resentment, my own wager is that Wolin and Virilio are closer to the mark. Capital does an outstanding job of de-centering subjectivities that are inhospitable to it while largely remaining immune to its own deterritorializing logics, so my tentative suggestion is that opposing it requires a renewed effort to think what progressive reterritorialization looks like rather than racing to embrace ever new deterritorializations. In the world of *The Walking Dead*, that would mean embracing the zombies as 'us' rather than 'them'—our pasts, our loves, our familiars—as something that we need to hold onto in spite of the way that these very things threaten our abilities to navigate the new maze that 2008 bequeathed us. As anyone who has undergone counselling or psychoanalysis can attest, of course, the past always threatens to devour us. Perhaps then *TWD* has a kind of hopeful moment, in Herschel's barn of zombies—a moment where the self tries to hold in tension the requirements of the new neoliberal world, while maintaining a tense, ever-dangerous grasp on affect and the past—though *TWD*'s narrative as a whole refutes this moment and banishes it to the realm of delusion.^{xviii} I would wager that a more radical embrace of the beauty and ugliness in 'the old' in us—our loves, our identities, our relations—will pose a stronger resistance to capital than the alternative (Brendese 2010). In part, the response to Connolly's wager depends on how you answer this question: is one more likely to take to a picket line or brave a police truncheon as an artistic project, or in the name of something dear that is fading into the past?^{xix}

Stefan Dolgert is Assistant of Political Science at Brock University, where he writes and teaches on democratic theory, critical animal studies, posthumanism, and ancient Greek political thought. His recent and forthcoming publications include 'Listening in Order Not to Hear?: Darwin, Politics and Sacrifice' (Theory & Event 2015) and 'Animal Republics: Plato, Representation, and the Politics of Nature' (Politics and Animals, forthcoming 2015); he has also published in Political Theory, Perspectives on Politics, Review of International Studies, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, and the Proceedings of the World Congress of Philosophy XXIII. He is currently completing a manuscript on posthumanism and ancient Greek political theory, and his website is: <http://brocku.ca/social-sciences/departments-and-centres/political-science/faculty-and-staff/professors-by-area/stefan-dolgert>

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Alex Livingston's fine response to this essay, delivered in his capacity as discussant for our panel at the 2013 Western Political Science Association in Hollywood CA, as well as the two anonymous *borderlands* reviewers for their quite helpful commentary. I would also like to thank PJ Brendese and Tim Ruback, my fellow presenters at WPSA, for entertaining the idea of a panel on monsters (and then delivering the goods).

Notes

ⁱ According to multiple single-episodes achieving record viewership, in seriatim.

ⁱⁱ Is it evidence of this that on March 9, 2013, *Saturday Night Live* took the time to parody this scene?

ⁱⁱⁱ Carl's shot has been prefigured by a number of earlier incidents in which family members have had to kill (or witness the killing of) their infected loved one: Andrea kills her sister Amy in Season One and Carol acquiesces to the death of her now-zombified daughter Sophia in Season Two.

^{iv} There are particular relations of affinity between the womb and zombies via the concept of puerperal fever. Though this theme is tangential to my task in this essay, note Julia Kristeva: 'puerperal fever is the result of female genitalia being infected by a corpse; here then is a fever where what bears life passes over to the side of the dead body' (Kristeva 1982, p. 155).

^v The 'zombie walk' is now a global phenomenon. Beginning in 2003 in Toronto, over 40 countries now have recurring events, in which ordinary citizens 'dress up' as zombies and stumble *en masse* (as zombies do) from a prearranged meeting area to another locale, usually in the center of the city..

^{vi} In both films it is the self-interested humans who are more depraved, and dangerous, than the zombies.

^{vii} Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_books

^{viii} There is a children's version of *Who Moved My Cheese?* which lacks much of the text of the original book, and comes with large illustrations depicting the actions of the four protagonists and the lessons they learn. The most interesting thing about the contrast between the two books is that the original is far more simplistic, and far more insulting to the intelligence, than is the children's book. Indeed, told as a children's fable the grotesque simplifications of the original are not so different from the simplistic tone of most books designed for toddlers. More importantly, however, the children's book lacks the framing story with the old friends from Chicago, and this is by far the most intellectually offensive section in the text. In addition to the transparent manner in which the frame attempts to inoculate against criticism of the fable (characters who do not think the fable is relevant are themselves rendered as one of the fable's problem characters), the stilted dialogue that inevitably leads to the conclusion most obviously telegraphed at the outset should make anyone grateful for the comparatively complex dramaturgy of Plato's 'By all means Socrates, consider it agreed ...'

^{ix} The mice instinctively do what the reasoning 'littlepeople' resist. They respond 'naturally' to the exigencies of the situation.

^x Haw writes messages on the walls of the maze ('the writing on the wall' as the text helpfully calls it), both for Hem to find later as well as for his own edification. The highlights include: 'Having Cheese Makes You Happy ... The More Important Your Cheese Is To You The More You Want to Hold On To It ... They Keep Moving The Cheese ... If You Do Not Change, You Can Become Extinct ... Movement in a New Direction Helps You Find New Cheese ... The Quicker You Let Go Of Old Cheese, The Sooner You Can Enjoy New Cheese ... Move With The Cheese" (Johnson 1998, pp. 30-75).

^{xi} I am reading this charitably, since the actual text only mentions a 'spiritual sense of well-being'. One does not have to be Evangelical or a Straussian to notice the tepid subjectivism of such a locution.

^{xii} For analogous arguments see Gitlin, 1979: 'major social conflicts are transported *into* the cultural system, where the hegemonic process frames them, form and content both, into compatibility with dominant systems of meaning. Alternative material is routinely *incorporated*: brought into the body of cultural production. Occasionally oppositional may succeed in being indigestible; that material is excluded from the media discourse and returned to the cultural margins from which it came, while *elements* of it are incorporated into the dominant form ... it is only by absorbing and domesticating conflicting definitions of reality and demands on it, in fact, that it remains hegemonic' (Gitlin 1979, p. 264), and Best, 2012.

^{xiii} Connolly's later work moves off this trajectory, or at least does not privilege speed as in *Neuropolitics*, and my commentary here is limited to Connolly's 2002 embrace of dromology (rather than a critique of his oeuvre as a whole).

^{xiv} This is the Greek term for the 'suffering into wisdom' seen in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*; for additional commentary on the hegemonic potentiality of tragedy see Dolgert 2012.

^{xv} Some versions of reception theory may offer a counterpoint to my media-socialization narrative—see Hall 1973 for the *locus classicus* of the 'encoding-decoding' model that stresses more autonomy for the spectator than I am inclined to admit.

^{xvi} Of course this perception of the imminence of disaster is itself an artifact of the affective registers conjured by post-9/11 late capitalism (see Massumi 2010).

^{xvii} One might think here of the response of mainstream economists to the rise of Syriza in Greece, that Greece's problems stem from its lack of self-control and attachment to outdated methods. See for example, economist Ricardo Hausmann: <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/greece-export-problem-by-ricardo-hausmann-2015-03>

^{xviii} Connolly's way of expressing this: 'a tense balance must be maintained in such an ethos between the claims of regularity, predictability, and commonality and those of experimentalism, artistry, and becoming' (Connolly 2002, p. 162). I would instead emphasize dependence, indebtedness, and memory in the first (reterritorializing) triad, though as I have been suggesting the tension is not just *between* past and future (or being and becoming, if you prefer) but *within* our relationship to the past itself. Our past can be like a zombie, feeding off us and destroying our future, but it may also be a crucial source of resistance to the tyranny of a future where love is as disposable as any consumer good.

^{xix} One might pose a number of challenges to my framing of the question, especially since I have not devoted much space in the text to fleshing out the implications of this argument, but the questions raised here are meant as provocations for future research. One could reasonably argue against me that the Immigrants' Days of Action in the USA in 2006, or Occupy Wall Street, were more about experimentalism and becoming than about the past. While I would certainly concede that both movements were attempting to fashion new kinds of political consciousness, my hunch is that such eruptions of novelty are themselves dependent on memory and sedimented identity, and would not exist absent some perceived threats to both.

References

Adams, V, Murphy, M & Clark A 2009, 'Anticipation: technoscience, life, affect, temporality', *Subjectivity*, vol. 28, pp. 246-265.

Ali, S, Fall, K & Hoffman T 2013, 'Life without work: understanding social class changes and unemployment through theoretical integration', *Journal of Career Assessment*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 111-126.

Armitage, J 2000, 'The theorist of speed: review of Paul Virilio, *la bombe informatique*', *New Left Review*, no. 2, pp. 145-147.

Best, B 2012, 'Raymond Williams and the structure of feeling of reality TV', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 2, no. 7, pp. 192-201.

Brendese, PJ 2010, 'For love of the impossible: *Antigone*, memory, and the politics of possibility', in K Bassi & JP Euben (eds), *When worlds elide: classics, politics, culture*, Lexington Books, Lanham.

Castree, N 2009, 'The spatio-temporality of capitalism', *Time & Society*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 27-62.

Christie, D 2011, 'A dead new world: Richard Matheson and the modern zombie', in D Christie & SJ Lauro (eds), *Better off dead*, Fordham University Press, New York.

Clark, S 2010, 'The undead martyr: sex, death, and revolution in George Romero's zombie films', in R Greene & S Mohammad (eds), *Zombies, vampires, and philosophy*, Open Court, Chicago.

Collins, M & Bond, E 2011, "'Off the page and into your brains!": new millennium zombies and the scourge of hopeful apocalypses', in D Christie & SJ Lauro (eds), *Better off dead*, Fordham University Press, New York.

Connolly, W 2002, *Neuropolitics: thinking, culture, speed*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Dolgert, S 2012, 'Sacrificing justice: suffering animals, the *Oresteia*, and the masks of consent', *Political Theory*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 263-289.

Gallo, W, Bradley, E, Dubin, J, Jones, R, Falba, T, Teng, H & Kasl, S 2006, 'The persistence of depressive symptoms in older workers who experience involuntary job loss: results from the health and retirement survey', *Journals of Gerontology Series B*, vol. 61, no. 4, pp. S221-S228.

Gitlin, T 1979, 'Prime time ideology: the hegemonic process in television entertainment', *Social Problems*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 251-266.

Hall, S 1980, 'Encoding/decoding', in S Hall, D Hobson, A Love & P Willis (eds), *Culture, media, language*, Hutchinson, London.

Jameson, F 1991, *Postmodernism: or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*, Duke University Press, Durham.

Johnson, S 1998, *Who moved my cheese?* GP Putnam's Sons, New York.

Jorgensen, M & Phillips L 2002, *Discourse analysis as theory and method*, Sage Publishers, London.

Kinnard, M 2013, 'Researcher: zombie fads peak when society unhappy', *Associated Press* 11 March, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/researcher-zombie-fads-peak-when-society-unhappy>

Kockelman, P 2007, 'From status to contract revisited: value, temporality, circulation, and subjectivity', *Anthropological Theory*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 151-176.

Kristeva, J 1982, *Powers of horror: an essay on abjection*, translated by Leon Roudiez, Columbia University Press, New York.

Laclau, E & Mouffe, C 1985, *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics*, Verso, London.

Lauro, S 2011, 'Afterword: zombie (r)evolution', in D Christie & SJ Lauro (eds), *Better off dead*, Fordham University Press, New York.

Lauro, S & Embry K 2008, 'A zombie manifesto: the nonhuman condition in the era of advanced capitalism', *boundary 2*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 85-108.

McAlister, E 2012, 'Slaves, cannibals, and infected hyper-whites: the race and religion of zombies', *Anthropological Quarterly*, vol. 85, no. 2, pp. 457-486.

Marcuse, H 1964, *One-dimensional man*, Beacon Press, Boston.

Massumi, B 2010 'The future birth of the affective fact: the political ontology of threat', in M Gregg & G Seigworth (eds), *The Affect Theory Reader*, Duke University Press, Durham.

Muntean, N 2011, 'Nuclear death and radical hope in *Dawn of the Dead* and *On the Beach*', in D Christie & SJ Lauro (eds), *Better off dead*, Fordham University Press, New York.

Murray, L 2010, 'When they aren't eating us they bring us together: zombies and the American social contract', in R Greene & S Mohammad (eds), *Zombies, vampires, and philosophy*, Open Court, Chicago.

Rudisill, J & Edwards, J 2002, 'Coping with job transitions', *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, vol. 54, no. 1, pp. 55-64.

Russell, C 2002, 'Against dead time', *Time & Society*, vol. 11, no. 2-3, pp. 193-208.

Scheuerman, W 2002, 'Constitutionalism in an age of speed', *Constitutional Commentary*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 353-390.

Sewell, W 2008, 'The temporalities of capitalism', *Socio-Economic Review*, vol. 6, pp. 517-537.

Sutherland, M 2007, 'Rigor/mortis: the industrial life of style in American zombie cinema', *Framework*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 64-78.

The Walking Dead 2010-present, TV series, executive producers Frank Darabont & Glen Mazzara, AMC Networks, New York.

Vandoros, S, Hessel, P, Leone, T & Avendano, M 2013, 'Have health trends worsened in Greece as a result of the financial crisis? A quasi-experimental approach', *European Journal of Public Health*, vol. 23, no. 5, pp. 727-731.

Virilio, P 1986, *Speed and politics: an essay on dromology*, translated by Mark Polizzotti, Semiotext(e), New York.

Williams, R 1977, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Winchester, N 1999, 'Speed as metaphysics', *History of the Human Sciences*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 159-166.

Wolin, S 2005, 'Agitated times', *Parallax*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 2-11.

—1997, 'What time is it?' *Theory & Event*, vol. 1, no. 1, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_&_event/toc/archive.html

Zani, S & Meaux, K 2011, 'Lucio Fulci and the decaying definition of zombie narratives', in D Christie & SJ Lauro (eds), *Better off dead*, Fordham University Press, New York.

Zurbrugg, N 1996, "'A century of hyper-violence" Paul Virilio: an interview', *Economy and Society*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 111-126.