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Disrupting air power: Performativity and the unsettling of geopolitical frames through artworks

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ABSTRACT

This paper advances the concept of disruption, drawing upon Butler's (1993) work on performativity, her engagement with Goffman's (1974) frame analysis and recent work on performativity within critical geopolitics. It argues this approach provides a useful tool with which to elucidate gaps in the iterative processes of geopolitical discourse production that offer opportunities for momentary distortions to these dominant articulations of power. It analyses the utility of this approach through discussion of three artworks by the acclaimed British artist Fiona Banner. In June 2010 she unveiled her prestigious Duveens commission project at Tate Britain. The work, entitled 'Harrier and Jaguar', was the most ambitious of a series of engagements with military aircraft which have spanned over a decade of creative work. Banner's work has become synonymous with challenging dominant discourses on power and war especially through textual representations of war films and innovative uses of military aircraft. Beginning with her book project, 'All the world's fighter planes' (2004) and moving through her Duveens project to the military aircraft-related work 'Tornado' (2010), this paper argues that Banner's work illustrates the utility of the concept of disruption; going beyond simply raising questions about our engagements with military aircraft, to actively disrupting our encounters with and understandings of these objects and thus popular representations of air power.

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Introduction: warfare and art

> "I consider artworks not as comments 'on' or 'about' geopolitics (a kind of spectatorship) or necessarily as rallying banners for political mobilisation conventionally understood (though they may be that), but more broadly as part of the geopolitical dynamic itself: as artefacts produced by people as part of their situated and embodied experience of power projection, capitalist globalisation, spectacular and covert political violence, rebordering and new strategies of surveillance and security" (Ingram, 2009, 262)

The association between artists and representations of warfare is an extensive and important one. Commemorative paintings and sculptures of victorious battles and their commanders have long adorned military buildings and our public art galleries. "Official war art" as Gibbon (2011, 104–105) suggests "work[s] as propaganda … largely through the emphasis it places on the war zone". Central to the picturing of these war zones are the personnel and materiel captured within them. And whilst analysis has often focused upon the human figures rendered within mediatised representations of the military (see Woodward, Winter, & Jenkings, 2009), the specialised tools, weapons and technologies that they use are also central to their identification as combatants in a war zone. Artworks and other media representations of these materials play a significant role in inculcating particular understandings of what our Armed Forces are for and how they operate. As Apel (2009), Ingram (2009, 2012b), Corcoran (2010), and others have so cogently illustrated, there are a growing number of contemporary artists working with a variety of media, who actively seek to uncover the hidden stories of conflict, to offer perspectives that 'official war artists' may not be able to, and challenge the dominant discourses that official war artists work within and reproduce.

This paper seeks to add to the burgeoning interest in art within geographical (see Crouch, 2006; Hawkins, 2010, 2011; McEwan & Nabulime, 2011; Tolia-Kelly, 2012), IR (see Blieker, 2009; Danchev, 2009; Sylvester, 2009), and specifically geopolitical analyses (see Ingram, 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Raento & Watson, 2000) to argue that artworks can be profitably understood to disrupt dominant

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geopolitical discourse. It will argue that in order to more fully contemplate the ways in which cultural objects influence perceptions and experiences of geopolitical discourse we need to employ a more nuanced conceptualisation than those elucidated elsewhere. Thus, the process of disruption is conceptualised through this paper as a performative engagement. As will be discussed below, by being drawn through a performative framework, disruption provides us with the ability to analyse how pieces of art can work at the moments of our engagement with them, to challenge our recognition of what specific tropes of geopolitical discourse are and do.

Disruption enables us to build on Ingram's (2009, 262) definition of artworks as "part of the geopolitical dynamic itself: as artefacts produced by people as part of their situated and embodied experience of power projection, capitalist globalisation, spectacular and covert political violence" to understand how iterative and citational practices of performativity present moments that are opened up through disruptive interventions that challenge these representations and experiences of dominant discourse. This paper focuses on the trope of military aircraft, most commonly represented in the geopolitical discourse as dominant tools of state power projection. As will be elucidated below, this focus has been adopted because of the significant place military aircraft occupy within dominant popular cultural representations of the threat and operation of state power (see Adey, 2010).

This paper focuses upon three artworks by the British artist Fiona Banner. This consideration of a small number of works by one artist has been chosen not to provide a single case study, but rather to offer a wider elucidation of performative disruptions of one discourse. Thus, here Banner's works are positioned as pieces that go beyond simply representing military aircraft to matter that actively disrupts popular geopolitical assumptions about the role and place of these aircraft as dominant tools of state power projection within war-fighting and peace-enforcement operations, through our engagements with them. Her use of military aircraft is also significant from an academic perspective as work by Gregory (2010), Raento and Watson (2000), Wohl (1994), and Fox (2009) illustrate the breadth of geographical engagements with visual representations of the aerial dimension in popular culture. Thus, this paper draws together extant work within critical geopolitics and associated disciplinary fields that are concerned with seeking to unravel the complexities of how objects of popular culture enable or actively counter geopolitical discourses.

Methodologically, this paper is based upon three sources; interviews given by Banner, published reviews of the three artworks chosen, and personal experiences of encountering and experiencing these pieces. This approach enables an investigation of the ways in which these pieces are imagined and created by the artist, how they are critiqued by other art professionals, and how they are personally experienced by their audiences. This is similar in approach to other work that has sought to analyse the geopolitical spaces and discourses of artworks (see Ingram, 2009, 2012b).

The paper is composed of four main sections. The first provides an overview of the relationship between critical geopolitics, media representations of warfare, and conflict-related artworks. It provides a review of relevant literatures to elucidate the ways in which geopolitical scholars have sought to analyse the role and place of artworks within popular cultural representations of the military and thus within the production of and challenges to dominant geopolitical discourses. This section identifies two key ideas within these literatures which are developed further in the following two sections. The first of these focuses on Judith Butler's work on performativity, and reviews relevant work within political geography that has utilised and critiqued this approach. The second turns to another of Butler's concerns, frame analysis, and considers how this approach in concert with performativity enables us to successfully develop the concept of disruption as a fruitful way of interrogating how we can challenge dominant geopolitical discourse. Disruption is proposed as a way of understanding the nature of our experiences of geopolitical representations and our interactions with artefacts and objects of material culture that challenge those dominant narratives. The final section draws these conceptual positions through an empirical illustration, focussing on three works by Fiona Banner; 'All the world's fighter planes' (2004), 'Harrier and Jaguar' (2010), and 'Tornado' (2010) to illustrate different aspects of the ways in which performative disruptions can unsettle geopolitical discourse. The paper concludes by stepping back from Banner's work to consider the wider implications of these engagements with disruption for emergent debates on geopolitics and art.

Popular geopolitics and the military

The relationship between the media and the military has been a vital source of interest for social scientists and theorists (see Graham, 2010; Gregory, 2010; Hughes, 2007). Virilio's (2002) concerns with the co-constitutive nature of war and media representations, Baudrillard's (1995) claim that the Gulf War was only a media event, Mirzoeff's (2005) contention that television coverage of warfare has become banal and normalised within the public consciousness, and Der Derian's (2009) insightful critique of what he terms the Military–Industrial–Entertainment–Complex are four significant examples of such engagements. Additionally, much work has focused upon the role and position of the human body within these mediatised representations. The work of Jenkings, Winter, and Woodward (2008), Roderick (2009), Woodward et al. (2009) and Woodward, Winter, and Jenkings (2010) illustrate the ways in which the soldier's body is inscribed with meaning within photographic media. Less well documented, however (although see Rech, 2014), are the ways in which specific technologies of warfare are fetishised; represented within the media in particular ways that iterate notions of power and dominance that are ascribed to them.

Within popular geopolitics, concerns with media portrayals of militaristic activities have tended to focus on analyses of geopolitical texts, be those comics and cartoons (Dittmer, 2005, 2013), films (Carter, 2007; Crampton & Power, 2005; Dodds, 2005; O'Tuathail, 2005) or video games (Huntemann & Payne, 2010; Power, 2007). In their paper on the future of popular geopolitics, Dittmer and Gray (2010) suggest that the field has become too heavily dependent on these often elite level, and predominantly representational, analyses, and instead argue that there is a need for a "new popular geopolitics centred on everyday practice and performance" (Dittmer & Gray, 2010, 1665).

Ingram (2009, 2011, 2012a, 2012b) has been at the forefront of working towards addressing Dittmer and Gray's (2010) concerns, intersected with analysing representations of military personnel and materiel in popular culture. In a sustained analysis of a number of recent War on Terror-related artworks Ingram has begun developing an intellectual debate on the relationship between art and geopolitical discourse. His interventions argue that critical geopolitics has a history of interest in the trajectory of the geopolitical gaze and that "part of the [geo]political potential of art is its ability to place within the field of vision things that are not meant to be there" (Ingram, 2009, 259). Further, he contends that these artworks provide a possibility of "defamiliarisation and revelation" that can challenge dominant geopolitical regimes of representation (Ingram, 2012b, 62). This 'field of vision' forms the first of two points of significance which can be identified in Ingram's work.

Ingram's work also provides significant insights into the performance and performative elements of artworks and encourages us to question how art works to challenge dominant discourses. Drawing upon recent work from feminist geopolitical scholars

(including Dowler & Sharp, 2001; Hyndman, 2004; Pain, 2009) Ingram (2011, 222) suggests that these works perform "multiple rhetorics and modalities of artistic intervention" that enable us to consider them "not as the final pronouncement on the geopolitical meaning of art, but as [individual] participatory performance[s]" that challenge dominant geopolitical discourse. He draws upon Koopman's (2011) explication of an alternative, or alter, geopolitics to suggest that the experimental nature of many artworks "open[s] up geopolitics to critical interrogation and creative refashioning in ways that are highly suggestive for alternative geopolitical projects" (Ingram, 2012a, 124). Furthermore, Ingram explicitly opens up the space of art itself as an interrogative element. His analysis of artworks that have focused on the War on Terror encourages questions about the spatialities of conflict and especially its physical impact through an exegesis of works such as Wafa Bilal's 'Domestic Tension' (in which the artist invited viewers to shoot a paintball gun at him via weblink) and Jeremy Deller's 'It is what it is' (in which he positioned a bombed-out Iraqi car in prominent locations in the US and UK). This focus on the performance of art geopolitically forms the second point of significance in Ingram's work. The following section takes this and the 'field of vision' noted above as stepping off points from which this paper begins to develop the notion of disruption as a key enabler of a critical, geopolitical, engagement with artworks.

Performativity in geopolitical analyses

Ingram's critical engagements with art and geopolitics, and his recognition of the significance of the 'field of vision' and the 'performance', offers an opportunity to open up geopolitical analyses of artworks to two conceptual engagements proposed by Butler. Firstly, this section discusses how Ingram's "participatory performances" can be more usefully refashioned to prioritise the performative over the performance (see Jeffrey, 2012 for discussion of this intersection). The following section then draws upon Butler's engagement with Goffman's (1974) frame analysis, to reconceptualise Ingram's 'field of vision' around the breaking of these frames. These will be drawn together to contend that engagements with artworks can 'disrupt' the prevalent recognition of objects, and their position with discursive tropes, through the positioning or projecting of disconcerting images or of re-contextualised objects within our field of view. Thus, these artworks are regarded as offering moments of disruption that can both create and also take advantage of breaks in the iterative process which throws the discourse into instability.

This approach is grounded in, but goes beyond, representational and discourse-centred geopolitical methods, drawing on critical, performativity-focused, analysis as well as the experiential, performance, modes favoured by feminist geopolitical writers. This perspective provides the opportunity to illuminate the performative dimensions of what Ingram identifies as a recursive relationship between artworks and 'the geopolitical dynamic' (Ingram, 2009, 262). Indeed, his use of 'dynamic' here gestures to the key argument in this paper; that disruption describes a temporalised event, a moment in which the individual experiencing artworks such as Banner's, has their understandings of our geopolitical world challenged by those objects.

Performativity is defined by Butler as the "reiterative and citational practices by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (Butler, 1993, 2). Work by Bialasiewicz et al. (2007), Glass and Rose-Redwood (2014), Jeffrey (2012), Müller (2008), Weber (1998), and Williams (2011) are illustrative of engagements by political geographers with this approach. Much of this work has focused on exposing the most prevalent aspect of critical geopolitical scholarship, practical geopolitics, to a performative analysis. In comparison, there has been relatively little work that has sought to draw Butler's work through a popular geopolitics lens. This may be due to ongoing anxieties regarding the performance/performativity debate yet, as Gregson and Rose (2000) and Jeffrey (2012) have shown, this negotiation is possible.

Work by Müller (2008) and Bialasiewicz et al. (2007) is particularly significant in that they consider not only the matter of performativity, but also the performativity of matter (see also Braun & Whatmore, 2010). Thus, whilst performativity is firmly positioned within discourse, this work also recognises that "discourse constitutes the objects of which they speak" (Bialasiewicz et al., 2007, 406). As will be illustrated below, this enables us to open up popular cultural objects to performative analysis, further breaking down the discourse materialist dichotomy (see Barad, 2003). This work allows us to consider the ways in which objects themselves are fluid, open to changing and reiterative encounters. Bennett's (2010) work expounds these approaches analysing how, for example, electricity grids (in all their complexity of human and non-human objects and interactions) can be changed from efficient systems into problematic, broken, structures and how in these performances of operation, or non-operation, objects that are routinely little-noticed can become the focus of concern, or blame, when procedures and elements fail. This work, configured through the notion of 'thing-power', clearly illustrates the performativity of objects and their fluidity as dynamic entities that affect geopolitical realities. Müller also concerns himself with an approach to performativity that enables the recognition of everyday practices and Rose-Redwood's (2008) work on naming provides additional significance here, focussing on the iterative and citational practices of nomenclatures. This offers an opportunity of intersection with Dittmer and Gray's (2010) popular geopolitics.

Most importantly, in terms of this approach is performativity's "process of recitation and repetition" which crafts discourse as a continually becoming set of characteristics (Bialasiewicz et al., 2007, 407; see also Jeffrey, 2012; Segal, 2008). This becomingness, with its inherent requirement for repetition, opens a space of opportunity. It is into the spaces of this repetition, the reiteration of citational practices that predominantly strengthen and maintain dominant discourses, that this paper seeks to pry. As will be discussed in detail below, these processes of repetition and reiteration can never be completely continuous, thus gaps appear and moments of opportunity are created that enable dominant discourses to be challenged (see Kaiser & Nikiforova, 2008; Lloyd, 1999). These are the moments of disruption upon which this paper focuses.

Framing air power

In 'Frames of War' (2010) Butler draws our attention to questions about "What is formed and framed through the technological grasp and circulation of the visual and discursive dimensions of war" (Butler, 2010, ix). Although her empirical focus is upon photographs of war and their often hidden relationship to the materiality of conflict, her utilisation of the notion of framing and her implicit recognition of the utility of Goffman's (1974) frame analysis to analyse how aspects and objects of visual and material culture perpetuate and challenge dominant discourse, bears close relation to Ingram's (2009, 259) concern with "the geopolitical potential of art … to place within the field of vision things that are not meant to be there". This 'field of vision' can be understood as a frame; "essentially a shared definition of presently occurring social reality" (Williams, 2002, 156). As Kuypers (2009) opines, they provide a way of filtering the world to foreground certain ideas and blur out others. Thus it is possible to make a link between frame analysis and critical geopolitics because, as for Butler, adopting the frame as the focus for analysis provides the ability to identify a dominant

mode of reality-creation and items that support or challenge the circulation and reiteration of that frame.

Butler is not alone in utilising frame analysis to interrogate representations and experiences of geopolitical discourse. Woon (2011) focuses upon the subaltern geopolitics of reactions to the framing of the Philippines as a space of fear in the post-9/11 era, Williams (2002) employs a frame-break analysis in relation to post-Cold War films, and Smith and Dionisopoulos (2008) focus upon the role of photographic images in the generation of War on Terror themes. Still more work has arguably utilised the notion of the frame in relation to geopolitics without explicitly linking it to frame analysis and Goffman's work (see, for example, Carter, 2007; Crampton & Power, 2005).

Butler contends that images that challenge those that perpetuate a dominant discourse resist it. However, this binary opposition tends to provide a set of two relatively-static mutually-reinforcing positions; one promoting a particular way of understanding the world, the other contesting that position from an equally entrenched opposing position. Within critical geopolitics there has been a sustained focus on modes of resistance to the dominant discourse (following Said, 2003 [1978]). Amongst the earliest interventions was Routledge's analysis of social movements as entities within a "terrain of resistance" (1996, 516). These "sites of contestation" are of course significant in relation to challenging dominant geopolitical discourses but they are most often understood as specific spaces and events that are planned and often explicitly engineered to occupy a fixed position (often both spatial and theoretical) in opposition to the discourse (Routledge, 1996, 516; see also McFarlane & Hay, 2003; Sharp, Routledge, Philo, & Paddison, 2000).

This urge to adopt resistant positions can also be seen in work explicitly focussing on the military (see Davis, 2011) and that analysing the work that art can do in questioning dominant discourse. Jabri's (2006) analysis of artistic responses to 'late modern war' illustrates this trend, focussing upon the relationship between art and the politics of resistance. Evolving into an anti-geopolitical stance which has been advocated by Ó Tuathail (1996) and Routledge (2007), amongst others, this approach provides an opportunity to adopt a position that eschews the dominant discourse and promotes an alternative reading of the world. Yet, whilst this anti-geopolitical perspective has a utility, it is also weakened by its adoption of this static resistant position. Williams (2002) argues that a dominant frame can be broken by the imposition of a new frame, which disrupts that which has pre-existed it (see also Goffman, 1974, 347). It is too simplistic to casually link this break to disruption, and indeed the frame break is not considered equivalent to disruption here. Instead, the breaking of the dominant frame through the imposition of a new one could be more readily linked to the adoption of a geopolitically resistant position. Ergo, the frame break in this sense is more much readily understandable as the replacement of one fixed perspective with another. Thus, this paper offers a more nuanced suggestion, that dominant frames are challenged by disruptive moments and events (being both spatially and temporally disruptive) that cause those frames to be thrown into confusion and exposing the gaps within the citational and iterative practices that enable their continuation.

Disrupting geopolitical frames

It is here that performativity and the disruptive frame break are brought into contact to provide this more nuanced conceptualisation. As discussed above, performativity's spaces of repetition contain gaps, where dominant categorisations can be challenged (see Jeffrey, 2012; Kaiser & Nikiforova, 2008; Lloyd, 1999). This is where the moment of disruption occurs. In order to fully understand this process it is necessary to unpick what disruption means, and how specific works of art can act, and be experienced, as entities that momentarily alter our perceptions of dominant geopolitical discourses.

Disruption as a descriptive term is little defined within geopolitical scholarship. Müller's (2011) analysis of the formation and disruption of geopolitical knowledge within Russia illustrates this. Whilst explicitly analysing how geopolitical knowledge can be disrupted by everyday experiences that contradict taught knowledge, Müller does not explain how disruption works as a specific geopolitically-related term. Thus it is useful to return to Goffman's explanations in order to locate disruption within a Butlerian frame analysis structure. Goffman argues that these disruptions can take a variety of forms and occur in a variety of spaces. He offers the example of an ethnographer, who when "responding to utterance and actions that are totally unbelievable by modern standards … must try to act as if he has not been jarred out of the conversational involvement" (Goffman, 1974, 352). This exemplifies how the disruption operates, illustrating how an uncanny, unexpected experience can act to cause a slippage in the experiencing of the dominant discourse, a disruption to the 'field of vision' that is troubling, but also important in that it offers the opportunity for the frame to be seen, questioned, and reassessed.

With reference to the empirical focus of this paper, the artwork is thus continually experienced anew by the audience, and these renewed encounters can act to disrupt the individual's understanding of the discourse being challenged by the artist. This paper therefore builds upon these engagements with Goffman's frame analysis to advance a useful and viable approach, based on Butler's concern with performativity and Ingram's focus on the 'field of vision' to investigate how certain artworks can act to challenge dominant geopolitical discourses through disruption.

Framing military aircraft as tools of power projection

Military aircraft have been chosen as the empirical focus of this paper because they provide some of the most visual and physical manifestations of state power; perhaps second only to the imagery of the soldier (see Wilkie, 2012). They project this power through their physical movement through the sky and also their presence as representational objects. Power projection in this mode, however, refers not only to the ability of a state to reach beyond its sovereign borders and exert its will to violence within another state's boundaries (see Williams, 2010). Instead, it can also refer to the visual representation of that power, a visual projection (from a cinematic origin) of the capabilities of a state to impose its will on another (see Virilio, 1989 for example). Thus, power projection is also about how an image is represented and experienced, creating a dominant discourse of military aircraft as tools of state power projection.

Power projection and its disruption by Banner's works can be thought of as part of what Dalby (2007, 106) terms the "politics of designating reality" and Wilkie (2012, 201) considers part of how "airspaces are fundamentally entwined in discourses of national identity". Analysing how Banner's work utilises military aircraft provides more than simply a useful point of intersection for work on popular geopolitics and that on military power projection. As incredibly visual illustrations of the military power of states, and conversely as objects that have been reified and rendered as fodder for the public to gaze upon at air shows and flypasts (see Adey, 2010; Rech, 2014) military aircraft are perhaps both the most normalised of all military technologies and also the most potent symbols of the global reach of military forces. Thus, engaging in a critique of Banner's work using the notion of disruption offers a way to elucidate how the discursive performance of geopolitical tropes can be effectively challenged by artworks, and provides a wider

consideration of the utility of employing disruption within geopolitical analysis.

Disrupting air power

Fiona Banner's pieces have been chosen as the focus of this paper because her work sits within the oeuvre of contemporary artists whose work illustrates a "radicalised reflexivity towards aesthetics, politics and the meaning of art itself" (Ingram, 2013, 461). The specific pieces considered here engage a desire to disrupt the power and normalised discourses of and engagements with military aircraft (see Wilkie, 2012).

> "[Banner] has long been fascinated by the emblem of the fighter plane. Her compulsion to grasp the uncomfortable resonances of these war machines has produced a growing archive of material. From pencil drawings to newspaper cuttings and Airfix model collections of all the fighter planes currently in service, the modesty of her works often contrasts with the heroic connotations of her subject." (Carey-Thomas, 2010)

Banner's use of military aircraft in altered, uncanny and surprising contexts has been a focus of her work. This can be seen in a continually expanding catalogue of pieces (including Nude Standing (2006), Nude Fin (2004), Bird (2006) and Aardvark (2007)) that use aircraft parts as backgrounds for texts or use whole or partial aircraft as the centre of interest.

Each of the following three sections focuses upon one of Banner's pieces in order to offer insights into how artworks can disrupt dominant geopolitical discourse, and thus to consider the utility, and limitations of employing this approach in popular geopolitical analysis. The first section focuses upon the piece 'All the world's fighter planes' and considers it through a broadly toponymic analysis, discussing how the disrupting of dominant naming strategies can affect recognition of specific objects. The second section, considers Banner's 'Harrier and Jaguar', illustrating how the artist's use of aircraft in uncanny and unsettling positions challenges the discourse of aerial power projection. Finally, the third section considers 'Tornado', Banner's innovative re-casting of an aircraft as a bell, and discusses how re-materialisations of objects can be disruptive. These three examples enable us to flesh out the utility of disruption as an aspect of performativity and one useful for geopolitical analysis of popular culture.

All the world's fighter planes

'All the world's fighter planes' is a long-running project which Banner says she began as far back as her student days when she was fascinated by military aircraft (Bickers, 2010, 3). It seeks to disrupt dominant representations of military aircraft by producing an alternative version of the Jane's 'All the World's … ' series of military spotter and information guides which provide photographs and salient facts about military materiel. The Jane's brand is well-known to military and security professionals and enthusiasts alike, offering authoritative information on military technologies reiterating the dominant discourse of aerial power projection.

Banner's version is clever in that it is visually similar in its content to a Jane's guide yet succinctly different in its tone and message. Hers is a 154-page book composed of newspaper cuttings of images of military aircraft which can be purchased by the audience, handled and stored as any other book would be. However, performatively it digresses from the official spotter's guide in how the aircraft are cited and visualised on the pages. As Bury (2004) notes,

> "instead of sitting pristine, on the tarmac or prancing at air shows, these aircraft come from news reports of war and other conflicts. There is no average scale to the images, and these images often invade the gutter of the pages: one fills a double-spread, another is as tiny as a squashed aphid. They fly left to right and right to left, up and down the page, some receding, others approaching us full one. On some pages there are as many as five types of aircraft. It is not a manual in any traditional sense".

What Banner has accomplished in this work is an explicitly ironic parody of mainstream popular media representations of military aircraft. Devoid of textual contextualisations and "therefore charged by a frustration of narrative expectations" (Bury, 2004), this work actively disrupts established understandings of how both the spotter's guide's immaculate imagery and the print media's images of warplanes work to represent military aircraft as machines used by states to project their power and how we experience that discourse. Thus, Banner achieves a double disruption; actively contesting the pristine nature of the spotter's guides and also interrupting our normal engagements with print media.

Central to Banner's fascination with this project is a desire, articulated within Princenthal's (2006) analysis of the project, to unpack the problematic of the nomenclatures of these aircraft. Names that have become mundane and banal in their multiple invocations across print, television and online media sources are actively sought out and questioned by Banner. And as Rose-Redwood (2008) has elucidated, they are central to the iterative and citational practices of discursive performativity. Indeed, his contention that "the performative act of naming may be subverted if the audience does not recognise its legitimacy" neatly describes the operation of Butler's piece (Rose-Redwood, 2008, 877). The front and back covers of the book simply list the names of the aircraft whose images are produced on the pages within. As Princenthal (2006) notes,

> "That the languages of violence and of sex share the same vocabulary; that the found poetry of warplanes' names, so many of them predatory birds and other noble, fleet carnivores, links them not only to the natural world but, specifically, to women … that glamour, which has always facilitated war … are among the lessons … of Banner's new work".

This connection is further reinforces by Bury (2004) who opines that

> "it is tempting to read on All the World's Fighter Planes an equation of the male-dominated high-tech world of military aircraft, its codes of display and its vocabulary of penetration and saturation and competition in size and potency, with that of the centrefold of the pornographic magazine world of the top shelf".

This illumination of the violence implicit within the aircraft in Banner's book acts to disrupt the dominant discourse of these craft. The names given to these aircraft are meant to ascribe potency and fear, and discursively project an idea about what these aircraft are able to achieve. However, by altering the context in which we engage with the images and names of these aircraft, in Banner's work we are caused to question our encounters with them and our reactions to their names.

Whilst Rose-Redwood's (2008, 882) concern to elucidate a toponymic aspect of performativity focuses upon the "political utterances" that practically perform places, Banner's 'All the world's

fighter planes' offers an opportunity to consider the extent to which this approach also has merit in relation to the repetitious naming of objects and how gaps in this process can be opened up, and dominant discourses disrupted, by the intervention of artworks such as this one. Disruption is performed here not only through the obvious parody of the Jane's guides and the more nuanced intervention that questions the role of the print media in the propagation of the representations of these aircraft and dominant geopolitical discourses more generally. Instead, it also operates in the challenging of how the names of these aircraft are perpetuated as standing in for their violent acts. Thus, this art works by causing us to question taken-for-granted objects (the newspaper and the aircraft spotter's guide) and the normalisation of these nomenclatures of war materiel. This highlights the partiality of the stories that we are told and makes explicit the performative practices, and opportunities to exploit the gaps in those practices, that re-iterate and reinforce these discourses.

Harrier and Jaguar

The second of Banner's pieces analysed here is her prestigious 2010 Duveens Commission for the Tate Britain gallery in London. Entitled 'Harrier and Jaguar', this sculptural work utilised two decommissioned British military aircraft to explicitly disrupt popular engagements with military air power. These aircraft had been sold by the UK Ministry of Defence and later purchased by Banner to create her artworks, thus they are out with any involvement from the British military.

In her foreword to the exhibition, Penelope Curtis, Director of Tate Britain, states that

> "By using real fighter jets, Banner confronts us with a form that perfectly represents its function, and in this way she reminds us of its real meaning … Banner's project speaks of invasion and of the shock and awe associated with modern warfare. It is sobering and impressive, exciting and nauseating too" (Curtis, 2010).

We are not unused to seeing military aircraft on display, in spaces not dissimilar to Tate Britain's Duveens galleries. However, as Bickers (2010) notes, these engagements usually occur in museum spaces, where aircraft are portrayed as heroic machines, part and parcel of the fabric of a country's history, and in the case of the Royal Air Force, as tools of explicit imperial control and power projection (see Omissi, 1990). As Wilkie (2012, 206) notes,

> "Encountering these immense machines in a gallery setting is an undeniably striking experience, involving spectacle, a consideration of power, and a strange kind of frisson at being able to get close to such objects seen normally at a distance."

And whilst scholars have problematised the power relations inherent in museums (see, for example, Luke, 1992, 2002; Sylvester, 2009), and the imperial aesthetic performed in spaces of military memorialisation (see, for example, Muzaini & Yeoh, 2005), little work has considered what happens when our engagements with and experiences of what we might think of as 'museum pieces' are disrupted. By altering how they look, from that which we are familiar with, and re-positioning them in spaces that cause them to become unsettling and outside of our discursively drawn boundaries of understanding, Harrier and Jaguar achieve this. As such, Banner actively seeks to challenge our views of and interactions with these aircraft. By altering our experiences of and with them we are forced to question our relationships with the dominant heroicised discourse that positions them as tools of power projection.

Tate Britain's Duveens Galleries are a vast space, extending to over 70 feet in length, with a high vaulted ceiling and central columns serving to split the space into two slightly smaller areas. The Galleries are entered from the entrance hall of the building and stretch its length from front to rear. The first of Banner's aircraft encountered when entering the gallery was the Harrier (see Fig. 1). Information on the origins and history of this specific aircraft is provided by Banner in the exhibition guide book, therefore explicitly reinforcing the dominant framing of this aircraft as a tool of power projection. This fighter aircraft, officially designated by the Royal Navy as Harrier ZE695, was first flown on 2nd February 1988. After three years in storage and modification it was assigned to 899 squadron, based at Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton, Somerset, and used to train pilots. In 1995 it was sent to 800 squadron, from where it was loaned out to various other Royal Navy fighter squadrons before being sent to 899 squadron and written off in a crash landing on 28th January 2000 (Carey-Thomas & Hickey, 2010).

Hung tail up, Banner's Harrier gives the impression of being some sort of immense prostrated bird, "a giant cruciform bearing down on the viewer below" (Carey-Thomas, 2010; see also Searle, 2010). Thus immediately we are confronted by the Harrier in an 'unnatural' position; the aircraft strung up, no longer able to maintain flight and dominate the air. This is Banner's first disruptive act; the initial encounter we have of Harrier is of an aircraft in the air (its 'natural' home) yet it is not in the air as we would commonly understand it within the geopolitical frame of aerial power projection. Banner's positioning of Harrier provides us with an unsettling encounter which opens a gap in the iteration of its dominant discourse; Harrier becomes at once familiar yet distinctly unfamiliar and challenging at the same time. Banner's positioning of Harrier is relatively comfortable and fits within our discursive register – we can recognise it as a military aircraft – but at the same

Fig. 1. Banner's Harrier at Tate Britain (August 2010).

time we cannot directly relate it to our stored reservoir of mediatised representations of the Harrier 'jump jet'. It is not the same aircraft that British news media covered in detail flying off Royal Navy aircraft carriers during the 1982 Falkland's War, or providing feats of hovering and extraordinary manoeuvrability at air shows we may have visited.

Banner, here, is playing with our spatial registers, removing Harrier from its aerial mastery and tethering it within the confines of the gallery provoking us to question our knowledge and positioning of this aircraft. In this way, Banner's Harrier is similar to Jeremy Deller's installation of the remains of a car bomb from Baghdad in the Imperial War Museum (Brown, 2010). In both instances the audience is allowed to get close to a machine that they should be familiar with, but through the actions of the artist, this familiarity is destabilised, the performative resonance of the car or the military aircraft is disrupted. Whilst this disruption may lead to individuals forming resistant positions in light of their engagements with these artworks, the pieces themselves simply disrupt the dominant geopolitical discourses with which they intersect.

Banner's treatment of the Harrier is not without subtlety. The colour scheme used is "the original military grey" (Banner, in Bickers, 2010). But, she has further adorned the Harrier with a feather design, in a slightly darker shade of grey. Barely visible until the viewer is close enough to the aircraft to touch it, this further disrupts the meaning of the object as we engage with it. Standing in front of Harrier, the fine detail of the paint scheme is not immediately apparent, and thus it is necessary to get very close to the aircraft in order to see the feather design in detail. Again, this alters our engagements with this machine; usually a tool of power projection kept far from arm's length, in this case the delicacy of Banner's colour scheme requires us to be much closer in order to perceive its detail. In this moment of closeness disruption occurs. Thus, here we have a spatialised performativity; the disruption is not universal and relies on the audience being able to see the small, delicate, marks on the Harrier's paintwork.

Carey-Thomas (2010) suggests that "this act of embellishment … draws on the military tradition of nose art, the personalising of a plane's fuselage … which turns the object into a huge totem marked by human hand". Harrier is thus removed from its natural surroundings, the spaces of war and violence in which its image is usually captured by the media and presented to us, and painted in a colour scheme that is both familiar and also radically unfamiliar. By keeping the grey metal colour Banner invites us to see that it is still clearly a Harrier, the colour scheme retaining the imagination of the aircraft's original usage aboard an aircraft carrier at sea. Yet at the same time, she has removed all other military paint features; the nose art, the roundel, the numerical designations, so the viewer's understandings of what this object is and what it means is being continually disrupted with every glance, from every changing perspective and every visual engagement. Thus through the removal of its military tattoos and their replacement with a bird-inspired design Banner has chosen to actively blur the boundaries between the natural and artificial occupants of the air and further disrupt dominant understandings of how a military aircraft's function is represented on its form.

The second aircraft in Banner's Duveens Commission piece is the Jaguar (see Fig. 2). This particular aircraft, as Banner's publicity material again explains, was first flown in the Royal Air Force in 1976, and used as a ground attack aircraft for bombing and reconnaissance during the 1991 Gulf War. After the end of Operation Desert Storm, this aircraft remained in the Middle East as part of the RAF's deployment to help maintain the Iraqi no-fly zones during the early 1990s, and was also on stand-by for activities in Operation Telic, the British part of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, although it was not used. It was deactivated in 2006 (Carey-Thomas & Hickey, 2010). Banner's Jaguar, like her Harrier, is also placed in an unnatural position in the gallery. But unlike the aerially suspended Harrier, Banner has positioned Jaguar upside down on the floor, as though it has been thrown there or simply discarded. This makes an obvious, yet important, gesture disrupting our media-inspired imaginings of these aircraft soaring through the air, defeating gravity and enabling British dominance of the air.

Fig. 2. Banner's Jaguar at Tate Britain (August 2010).

Banner has also altered the appearance of the Jaguar, but in a much more overt way than Harrier. The aircraft has been stripped not only of its military designations, but has also had all of its paint removed and has been buffed to a gleaming mirror-like shine.

This radically alters our encounter with this aircraft, as Banner states;

> "The Jaguar is like a giant Airfix model; stripping it has revealed all the structure and also the anomalies in the surface. It feels like a radical object but, at the same time, polishing it makes it into a non-object because it disappears, the reflective surface constantly updates itself, it refuses to be static. And you as the viewer cannot separate yourself from it, you see yourself reflected in the work, there is a literal collapse between subject and object" (Banner, quoted in Bickers, 2010).

The inability to look at this aircraft without seeing your own reflection looking back is, as Banner comments, one of the most significant aspects of how she alters the nature of our relationship with this aircraft and illustrates how the disruption of our frame of reference is enacted. Instead of being a cold detached military machine, it becomes an object only realised through our processes of looking, the colour of the aircraft becoming the colours of our clothes, hair and skin, reflected in its mirrored shine. Through this we are unable to escape our role in its materialisation, we are intimately engaged in constructing and performing the disruption of its form and function.

Jaguar is thus clearly illustrative of recent work that calls our attention to the matter of performativity, and the concomitant performance of discourse (see Braun & Whatmore, 2010; Müller, 2008). Barad's (2003, 822) work on material-discursive intra-action is of key significance here providing an opening beyond the practice-based discourse of recent critical geopolitical scholarship, to contend that material and discourse are always already implicated in their "iterative enactments". Whilst not suggesting that disruption works within the agential realist frame that Barad favours, her approach nonetheless offers a way to further elucidate

how disruption can act in relation to a performative becoming of matter. As discussed above, recent work on materiality in geography has further developed these conceptualisations and offers additional insights into the utility of the notion of disruption (see Bennett, 2010). Furthermore, work on object-oriented philosophies by Meehan, Shaw, and Marston (2013) and Shaw and Meehan (2013) adds another strand to these emergent engagements. That Jaguar can only be seen through the engagement between it and its audience enables us to consider the ways in which matter and performativity are entwined and the role and place that disruption can play in elucidating these interactions.

Tornado

Tornado was commissioned as part of the 'Cultural Olympiad' for the 2010 Great North Run (a half-marathon run each September in the north-east of England), and was installed on the quayside in Gateshead, on the southern bank of the River Tyne, during the summer of 2010. Tornado, like Harrier and Jaguar, uses a decommissioned British military aircraft as the basis for the creation of an artwork that actively disrupts our understandings of what military aircraft are, what they do, and how they are represented and experienced.

Tornado disrupts the materiality of military air power. Banner alters our engagement with the aircraft by changing its shape, rematerializing it as a new entity that disrupts our field of experience of what a military aircraft is and does. She achieved this by having the aircraft melted down and recast as a large bell. Inside the bell, the words 'Tornado FB 2010' are visible in raised metal around the rim, and the aircraft's service number, ZE728, is raised in relief on one side of the outside waist of the bell. The bell was slung under a large 'A' frame, and positioned on a disused area of land between the Tyne Bridge and Swing Bridge that cross the river in the centre of the redeveloped quayside area where Newcastle meets Gateshead (see Fig. 3).

At first glance Tornado may be less readily understandable as disrupting military aviation than Banner's previous works. Encountering the bell you are not confronted by an aircraft at all. Indeed, if you do not read the information plaque located near the bell, it is easy to engage with this object without any awareness of its wider significance. This further reinforces the need to consider disruption within a material-discursive framing; the written text and the physicality of the bell together performing the disruption of dominant air power discourse. It is only through the audience's performative engagement with both script and matter that the disruption can occur.

Fig. 3. Tornado on Gateshead quayside (August 2010).

In an interview about the project Banner discusses her choice of subject, stating that the "Tornado aircraft is possibly the most important and vicious European aircraft of the past thirty years" (quoted in Bickers, 2010, 4). Indeed, it has been widely represented within the media as the most powerful RAF aircraft of recent years, and was heavily involved in the UK's military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, as well as providing, until recently, the UK's home air defence provision. The scrapping of the UK's Joint Harrier Force in favour of retaining the Tornado fleet in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (HM Government, 2010) illustrates the continuing significance of this aircraft for the UK military's current operations and future planning.

In contrast to this dominant representation Banner argues that in transforming her Tornado she has created,

> "the simplest object of communication … it is a marker of time, and space. The bell is an instrument that doesn't require music, a communicative tool that needs no words. In a sense the bell is an object that exists outside of itself" (Banner quoted in Bickers, 2010, 4).

In this piece Banner actively seeks to make us question the function of the aircraft. Rather than simply changing its spatiality and our encounters with that, as she did with Harrier and Jaguar, with Tornado she has gone further, reducing the aircraft to its constituent raw material and reusing that to produce a new, yet linked, object. Thus, the very matter of its existence has been changed, adding another layer to its disruptive potentiality.

Furthermore, Tornado is an interactive piece of art, something which requires us to think beyond simply rendering it in an intra-action sense (Barad, 2003). Whilst Jaguar provides an uncomfortable and unresolved encounter, enabling us to see our reflection but not to touch it, Tornado does not just allow us to experience it across a sensory spectrum, it actively encourages a range of aural and haptic interactions (Hawkins & Straughan, 2014). The information plaque provided a short distance from the bell announced that "the bell may be rung between 10 am and 7 pm" (Greatnorthrunculture, 2010). And, during my observations of the bell numerous groups of people did just that, sounding a loud, deep, ring audible across the river. Tornado illustrates how disruption is in a continual process of becoming, in which the boundaries of performativity and materiality are under constant challenge. We are required to ask whether Tornado's disruption occurs in the reading of the descriptive text, or the moment of seeing the bell, or in swinging the clapper, or in hearing the bell ring?

We might consider that it is the sound that resonates from Tornado that is the most significant aspect of how this piece disrupts our understandings of military aircraft and their mediatised representation. Indeed, we are all too familiar with, and have perhaps become somewhat normalised to, the sound of military aircraft engines thundering across the sky, and the terrifying sounds of their bombs exploding. The continuous coverage of the 'Shock and Awe' campaign in Iraq in 2003 on news channels can have left no audience in any doubt of the fear and threat associated with those sounds. The strap-line 'Jet noise: the sound of freedom' has long been a key trope within the military aviation world illustrating the importance connected to the sound made by these aircraft (Lambert, 1995). The RAF explicitly uses the sounds made by its combat aircraft flying at low level as a tactic in Afghanistan to create fear amongst the population, or supposed, enemy combatants, on the ground. These shows-of-

force, or non-kinetic attacks (MOD, 2009), thus rely on the sound of the aircraft to 'police' the local population and are a tactic with a long history, originating with the RAF in Iraq during the inter-war period (see Omissi, 1990). Thus, although distorting the visual signification of a military aircraft, Tornado's most significant disruption is in how it enables the relationship between air power and its noise to be distorted through the change of control over the making of its sound. With Tornado, Banner actively challenges what the sound of a military aircraft is, and the affective and emotional responses that it generates.

Conclusions

This paper has focused upon three works by the British artist Fiona Banner, in order to add to existing literatures on geopolitics and art, and is indebted to Ingram's influential work in this area which has been vital to opening up new ways of thinking about what counts as being geopolitical and how we can engage with these entities. It has sought to approach this through the adoption of the concept of disruption drawn through performative framings. This approach offers a valuable opportunity to critique how art can challenge how we understand geopolitical engagements and encounters with popular culture. Although this paper has focused upon only three artworks, in advancing this approach, it offers the opportunity to develop further analyses of the utility of disruption to geopolitical critique within and beyond artworks. Disruption, as detailed in the paper, offers a different approach that actively seeks to go beyond discourse analysis to enable us to develop further insights into the cultures of geopolitical practices through an engagement with performativity's discourse-materiality perspective.

Stepping back from this paper's focus on artworks, disruption offers an alternative to the fixed, static, positions of resistance, anti- and alter-geopolitics, foregrounding the importance of identifying the gaps within the reiteration and citation of dominant discourses, and offering a way to pry them apart that we might more fully understand their significance. The opportunity to focus on these gaps, and their disruptive potentiality, provides a way of encountering and challenging a much wider range of geopolitical discourses than the confines of this paper have enabled. For example, recognising disruptions in standard geopolitical discourse analysis enables us to go beyond simply acknowledging silences to identifying those seeking to speak into those spaces, and those actively articulating alternative perspectives that challenge those silences with opposing, disruptive, viewpoints. In addition, consideration of geopolitical disruptions enables us to place the performative centrally to our analysis necessitating a questioning stance; how are discourses being iterated, how do slippages in their reiteration occur and what effects do these produce? Empirically, these interventions offer opportunities to engage with a wide range of popular media, to analyse how, for example, more time-sensitive activities such flash mobs or social-media campaigns might actively challenge dominant spatial and temporal norms by throwing them into momentary confusion.

Furthermore, the recognition of a flat ontology provided by Barad's discourse-materiality perspective offers an opportunity to employ a disruptive analysis to material inclusive of a much wider definition of geopolitical. Recent social media campaigns that have formed around photos of people holding signs with hashtags on them fits well here. These emergent political activities necessitate consideration of how and where the geopolitical is being performed, and analysis of the discourse-material dynamic in the articulation of these ideas and movements through the texts, photos, signs, and social media websites that perform and disrupt them. Thus, this approach provides for encounters with all manner of text and matter that may be influential in the citation and iteration of geopolitics.

Acknowledging the becomingness of this approach also enables us to recognise the importance of a temporal element in how we encounter the geopolitical world (see Klinke, 2013), as the examples above have illustrated how the becoming of disruption occurs in temporal and spatial gaps. Furthermore, they have illustrated how the over-riding discourse of military aircraft as tools of power projection remains, yet through Banner's works our position of acceptance of that discourse is opened to question. Performativity, encountered through this discursive framing, thus continues to offer a rich seam for geopolitical scholars and political geographers to tap. The focus on Banner's work here adds to emergent recognition of its utility to problematize the production of geopolitical tropes by and through popular cultural entities. This paper has shown the utility of the continuing engagement with this approach, and through the introduction of a specific focus on disruption, has sought to add to other works that have positively critiqued performativity's utility as a tool for geopolitical analysis. Butler's frame analysis and Ingram's fields of vision thus provide an entry point not only to for further work that focuses upon the ways in which art works geopolitically, but also for the interrogation of the performative disruptiveness of a much wider range of geopolitical imagery and imaginaries.

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