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One of the consequences of Islamic terrorism since the end of the 1990s is a crisis of trust, with the attacks deepening the lack of trust in the capacity of modern democracies to ensure the security of their population. This chapter shows how the television series *Homeland* (Showtime, 2011–20) could act as a resource to educate viewers about democratic life: not through reassurances about the power of intelligence agencies, but by allowing viewers to regain or restore trust in the democratic experience itself.

Such a hypothesis may seem at best surprising and at worst naive. To establish this hypothesis, we must confront at least four problems. The first problem lies in considering a television series as a resource for the political and moral formation of its audience when it is also a product of the culture industry. As Theodor Adorno points out, the culture industry produces consumer goods—not works that are capable of any kind of formation or transformation in consumers: 'The culture industry fuses the old and familiar into a new quality. In all its branches, products which are tailored for consumption by masses, and which to a great extent determine the nature of that consumption, are manufactured more or less according to plan.'[1] Consumers of this industry, which include viewers of television series, would be dominated by the logic of technological capitalism. The latter is constantly extending its logic by subjecting leisure time to standardized entertainment: 'the repetitiveness, the selfsameness, and the ubiquity of modern mass culture tend to make for automatized reactions and to weaken the forces of individual resistance'.[2] So, there would be a power of television—one that lies in training individuals in order to subject them to societal control. This power would not seek to educate the audience or even invite them to express their own voice.

The second problem arises when trying to understand the scope and uses of a television series that depicts intelligence agencies and deals with

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international relations. As Jutta Weldes and Christina Rowley show, these elements of popular culture should not be underestimated because 'popular culture not only reflects but also constitutes world politics'.[3] When it comes to describing a vision of world politics that it then develops, *Homeland* is a controversial series. Despite its efforts to depict an alternative narrative for the foundations of the so-called 'war on terror', the series was perceived as legitimizing the discourse and reasons put forward to justify it.[4] It was also seen as maintaining fear of 'the other'[5] and reproducing racist and Islamophobic stereotypes.[6]

The third problem lies in the conditions of production of the series, and the collaboration between the writers, actors, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in particular. As Tricia Jenkins notes, 'the Agency extended its hand to the series' writers, producers and actors'.[7] How, then, can we not doubt the independence of the series? If the CIA did indeed support the series, is it not propaganda? This is what Weldes calls the first mode of the relationship between popular culture and international politics, or 'state uses of popular culture'.[8]

The fourth problem, a philosophical one this time, involves asking what kind of 'education' and what kind of 'democracy' we are talking about when we talk about the education of democratic life made possible by a television series that originates in popular culture. *Homeland* is not exactly a show for children. So what meaning does the word education have for adults? Is it not paternalistic to suppose that grown-ups can be educated by fiction? Finally, what does democracy mean in the series if we need to be educated about it? If we agree that democracy is based on recognition of the individual freedom of each person, is it not contradictory to demand an education in this freedom?

To address these problems and support the hypothesis put forward above, I will situate my remarks in a double framework. The first framework is that of television studies, which examines the series as an *object*. This approach relies on a renewed understanding of television offered by Jason Mittell in what he calls 'complex TV'.[9] The second framework is one provided by Stanley Cavell's philosophy of film, which approaches the series as an *experience*. Continuity between film and television is possible today thanks to the work of Sandra Laugier[10] and Martin Shuster,[11] who insist on the educational power of a series in the sense of an education for adults that aims to develop their capacity for change (or to transform themselves). Because of their presence in everyday conversation, films and series provide an excellent opportunity for this. From these two frameworks, the analysis that follows in this article is a 'reading' of the series—in the sense that Cavell produces 'readings' of films[12]—based on the experience of watching eight seasons of *Homeland* between 2011 and 2020.

This essay is organized in two sections. The first section presents *Homeland* as a multilayered object, whose narrative and aesthetic variety expresses a moral and political complexity that is properly democratic. The second section

shows how watching *Homeland* provides the spectator with a singular experience about trust as a condition for the democratic way of life.

Breaks in the Framework for *Homeland*: Analysis of a Complex Object

Homeland is a television series that was originally broadcast on the cable channel Showtime between 2011 and 2020. It includes eight twelve-episode seasons through which we follow the work of CIA agent Carrie Mathison and several of her colleagues in their fight against terrorism (and more broadly, against anything that threatens American democracy). For the first five seasons, *Homeland* tells a story about the war against Islamist terrorism. Season 6 marks a turning point by introducing another subject: the production of fake news and Russian attempts to destabilize American democracy. Seasons 7 and 8 show the tensions between the United States and Russia; while the war on terrorism remains present, it becomes a secondary issue in relation to geopolitical rebalancing between political forces. Throughout the series, Mathison has a troubled relationship with the CIA. She is suspended, then reinstated, then permanently disbarred. At her side is Saul Berenson, deputy director, who is also sidelined several times. Other characters such as Dar Adal, CIA black operations director, and Peter Quinn, a former CIA paramilitary officer, complete the picture and present a much darker side of the Agency.

In more than one way, the *Homeland* series fits perfectly with Mittell's description of complex TV. The serial dynamics of this fiction give the work a strong narrative complexity. The viewer who watches this series at length, episode after episode and season after season, can follow it effectively only by participating in the construction of the narrative unity. Construction involves relaying the various narrative frames. Contrary to what Adorno claims, the viewer of this series does not occupy the univocal role of a consumer. Moreover, the extent of the offer in terms of television series, as well as the diversification of channels and platforms, suggests that the choice to watch one series over another, or to continue to watch it over abandoning it for another, draws on multiple personal motivations that cannot therefore be reduced to the simple logic of consumption. Due to its seriality, the object lends itself to a different relation with the viewer—one of interaction and construction. As Umberto Eco reveals, seriality requires an 'encyclopedic capacity' and the practice of an 'enlarged intertextuality' from the spectator.[13]

These terms are useful for articulating the differences between various moments of the series. But they are also useful in positioning the series in relation to various points of reference, whether fictional or real. Seriality, in this specific poetic context of complexity, does not create a standardized work. Instead, it gives place to distinctive and singular practices on the part of authors, producers, and even channels that take advantage of seriality to

create new relations with viewers. Complex TV is thus a condition for 'quality TV' from HBO, which has inspired channels such as FX and Showtime. Such series are products of the culture industry that avoids dumbing down for their audiences. From these poetic foundations, a TV series can be understood as a new form of art that cannot be reduced to just content for viewers' consumption.[14]

Homeland was not the first television series to focus on the war on terror. The series *24* also did so from 2001 through 2010 and again in 2014, but from a different perspective. In *24*, the challenge is to thwart the occurrence of an imminent attack in the upcoming twenty-four hours. The whole story adopts the ticking time bomb scenario, making the ability to provide security contingent on the effectiveness of the action. In *Homeland*, the 9/11 attacks have already taken place; if there is indeed a question of preventing other attacks, the challenge is not so much to act but to act with full knowledge of the facts. It is therefore an understanding of terrorism that is required. This understanding relies on both the quality of information and the quality of information analysis that we are able to produce. As the issue moves from the effectiveness of action to the quality of understanding, it is essential for the series to account for the complexity of the interactions that are being analysed. And this is what *Homeland* does, through a skilful narrative construction that reveals complexity through ruptures in the initial framework of its narrative.

The main difference between *Homeland* and other series or fiction about terrorism lies in the way that *Homeland* integrates into its narrative a set of breaks in the original framework of representation, as French sociologist Eric Macé explains in his heuristic analysis.[15] Starting with a framed representation of the war on terror, the series considers the off screen and the reverse angle (or *contrechamp*). In the end, it even discusses the evolution of this original framework to reveal fluidity and complexity.

Homeland begins by presenting an expected framework. The framework of the war on terror emerges in the opening credits of the first season, which mixes television archives with the symbolic evocation of characters. There are references to several attacks against the United States, from the 1988 Pan Am plane attack in Lockerbie and the attack on the World Trade Center to American interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although the credits mix several different kinds of terrorist threats, the idea of the original framework is simple: since the end of the Cold War, the Arab and Muslim world have constituted the primary threat to the security of the United States.

This framework of the war on terror is a familiar starting point for the viewer, as evidenced by the television archives and, in particular, by *24* (the earlier series by the producers of *Homeland*, Alex Gansa and Howard Gordon). From there, *Homeland* puts forward three challenges that introduce complexity into what would otherwise have remained a simplified and Manichean framework of a 'crusade against terrorism'.

The first intervention occurs through references to what we could call off-screen effects. Several times throughout the series, *Homeland* describes

harmful effects, collateral damage, blunders, or the brutality of the war on terror along with its human and moral consequences. The transformation of American soldier Nicholas Brody into a terrorist is not explained by the trauma of his captivity, for example, but by the trauma of an American drone strike on a school in Iraq that killed eighty-two children—including one, Issa, the son of his jailer, to whom he had become attached (s1:e9, 31:18–41:50). The video that Brody then recorded to claim responsibility for his future attack was an opportunity to denounce what appeared at the time to be a war crime. Later, in season 4, a new drone strike (this time ordered by Carrie) is subject to the same treatment. And later again, in season 8, when she finds herself on the field of this strike, Carrie remembers the event and we see her doubt.

The continuity of this narrative throughout the eight seasons introduces reflexivity about both the series and the CIA's drone programme. It is another way to show the complexity of choosing rightful means to defend a just end. According to Macé, this rupture in the framework can be interpreted in the language of sociology as a 'counter-hegemonic rupture' against the closing effect of an ideological framework.[16] This first intervention sets up a critical questioning of the primary framework for the actions of a democratic government in its fight against terrorism.

The second intervention in the framework is produced by reverse-angle effects. Here again, on several occasions during the series, various characters are used to restore a balance of point of view. Some characters have the opportunity to explain the 'good reasons' for their terrorist or populist commitment, to the point of presenting them as acts of 'resistance' in the new asymmetrical war regime that is terrorism. Examples include Brody, an American soldier who is committed to the cause of Abu Nazir (season 1) and Haqqani, the Taliban leader (season 4) or, more unexpectedly, Brett O'Keefe, a populist podcast host and propagator of destabilizing fake news (season 7), and Yevgeny Gromov, a controversial officer of the Russian GRU, the foreign military intelligence agency (season 8).

Throughout the series, there is some attempt to feature conversations between characters who do not share the same vision of the world. Even if these conversations do not lead to a shared consensus, they expose a plurality in point of view and extend an opportunity for the viewer to think about the issue. The conversation between National Security Advisor Saul Berenson and trolling podcast host O'Keefe (s7:e3, 21:30–24:07) is an opportunity to explicitly articulate the reasons that motivate O'Keefe and to begin to acknowledge the relevance of his position—even if his position is inconvenient for democratic life. Far from propaganda about a sweet and perfect democracy, *Homeland* succeeds in showing the opposite through off-screen and reverse-angle effects that allow the viewer to hear a plurality of voices and confront competing points of view.

The third rupture involves the evolution of the original framework of the war on terror towards one of the game of international relations and the

balance of oppositions. This reframing impulse is embodied in particular by the character of Berenson who, at every opportunity (especially in seasons 3 and 5, but also in season 8), tries to abandon military options in favour of diplomatic ones. The movement of the series, from its first to its eighth season, takes part in this reframing: the series begins by focusing on the war against terrorism, but ends with new faces of opposition between the United States and Russia.

Thus, if one focuses on the first seasons, especially the first three seasons based on the narrative arc of Brody's return and the terrorist threat he represents, *Homeland* is indeed less complex than it seems. The expression of Brody's motivations, the questioning of the use of drones, and the staging of the CIA's vulnerability are not enough to deconstruct and completely delegitimize the framework of the war on terror, as Jack Holland notes.[17] But such analysis is only based on a partial reading of the series, which gives rise to an important point about analytical method: *Homeland* has eight seasons that are not independent of each other. Instead, they answer to and reflect on each other. Just as one cannot judge a book by its cover, one cannot judge a complex TV series by one or several seasons alone, as Holland and Louise Pears do. Surprisingly, so does the 2014 book *Homeland and Philosophy*, which focuses on the situations, scenes, or characters of the first season while discussing them as examples of classical philosophical issues, such as the personal identity issue or the influence of traumas on the moral life, etc.[18]

This does not mean one cannot say anything about a series before it is over. But it does mean that one cannot claim that part of a series expresses the whole series, or that the end of a series was contained in the beginning. Since this does not correspond to the way that these series are actually written, it does not account for the experience that the series creates in the viewer who follows it. Taken as a whole, the series changes its face over time: the main characters of *Homeland* are not Carrie and Brody, but Carrie and Saul. The main narrative arc is not the terrorist threat of a returned prisoner of war, but the difficulties—internal and external—that the CIA must face to ensure the security of the United States. As *New Yorker* journalist Emily Nussbaum says, series are works about time.[19] So, they must be considered in light of the entire length of the time they embrace.

Taken as a whole, from beginning to end (and especially in terms of its serial dimension wherein each new season introduces reflexivity about the preceding ones), *Homeland* is a fiction that progresses from a certain vision of the war on terror (seasons 1 to 3) to eventually show its failure (seasons 4 to 6). This then leads into questioning the role of the CIA in the political and democratic game unfolding at national and international levels (seasons 7 and 8). Thanks to its seriality, or evolution through time and continuity, *Homeland* gradually weaves an aesthetic and political alternative to the confrontation of war. It does so by bringing complexity, plurality, and regulation into the geopolitical game.

The evolution of this story is compatible with the education of the spectator on the complexity of the contemporary world. It expresses a certain vision of democratic values and a certain democratic conception of international relations. The interventions mentioned above stage an important question about the possibility of a democracy being as democratic in its ends as in its means. A question of means is also a question of the legitimacy of an intelligence agency, such as the CIA, in addition to its methods.

Is *Homeland* a propaganda series? In her work on how the CIA collaborates with film and television productions, Jenkins gives a balanced answer to this question. For her, *Homeland* presents a break in the representation of the CIA in popular culture and therefore in the manner of collaboration for a production:

> On many levels, the CIA's decision to assist these cultural producers, who engage with some of the most morally complicated aspects of the Agency's war on terror, including the use of torture and the drone program, constitutes a much-needed move away from propaganda that traditionally comes out of the PAO[20] and towards a newfound capacity to admit both nuance and mistakes in the Agency's efforts even while trumpeting its successes.[21]

We are thus witnessing a new way for the CIA to defend its image. Even as it accepts fiction that questions its practices, the Agency still manages to defend its role and its contribution to safeguarding national interest and security. There is indeed a game of influence, but it is no longer propaganda. The CIA now enters a game of communication and lobbying usually practised by associations and professional unions. For this reason, we do not agree with Deepa Kumar and Arun Kundnani's analysis of how *Homeland* continues to justify national security policies as *24* does.[22] Once again, this analysis is based on only three seasons of the show. And when it comes to considering the whole series, the CIA is portrayed, time and again, as unable to identify an imminent terrorist threat (season 1), as vulnerable (season 3), as resorting to illegitimate drone strikes (seasons 4 and 7), and finally as more concerned with its own power than with the public interest (seasons 7 and 8). A reading of the series as a whole, through its eight seasons, therefore leads one to believe that the collaboration between the CIA and the creative team of the series brings out a much more nuanced representation of the CIA. There is certainly still a question of influence, but it is posed within the new public space now constituted by popular content that recounts and questions the strategies and role of an intelligence agency in a democratic country.

An analysis of the poetic, aesthetic, moral, and political complexity of *Homeland* allows us to answer the first three problems noted at the beginning of this chapter. *Homeland* is not merely a standardized consumer product of the culture industry. The development of its narrative goes beyond the initial

framework of the war on terror. The moral complexity of the characters and described situations even goes so far as transforming the way that the CIA thinks about its own image and the defence of its interests in the public space. As such, the series can be a resource for democratic debate. In the following section, I show how *Homeland* provides an original moral experience by restoring trust as the foundation for the democratic way of life.

Homeland: Restoring Trust in Light of New Complexity in the Modern World

Homeland was born from the trauma of the 9/11 attacks. These attacks are the event that made it possible to reveal the vulnerability of American power. Many years of war against terrorism, both in Afghanistan and Iraq, have failed to erase doubts about this vulnerability. This is because the deployment of traditional military power on the ground, with its compromises in violence and lies, has emerged as an undemocratic means of defending democracy. Terrorism in the early twenty-first century therefore addresses a new moral and political complexity: how can the public continue to trust a democratic government that has so little capacity to defend itself and provide security for its citizens?

The crisis of trust expressed through terrorism reveals a deeper crisis of trust in democracy under the complex conditions of the modern world, according to sociologist Anthony Giddens.[23] Today, Islamic terrorism is a new facet of this complexity. In a more structural way, we can think of this crisis of trust as rendering it impossible for us to give an account of our certainty as it relates to the experience of democracy. The vulnerability exposed by Islamic terrorism, the fear that it entails, and the seeming irreconcilability between different worldviews that it reveals can also be thought of as an expression of the scepticism that haunts the ordinary of our condition, in Cavellian thought.[24]

So, how do we remedy this crisis of trust? What outcome can we hope for from this scepticism? Here, a series such as *Homeland* becomes a resource for restoring trust. Because it is a series that develops over a lengthy period of time, the spectator is led to *follow* it. A series is a fictional narrative that the viewer is compelled to follow regardless of its complexity. It teaches the viewer to be patient, to not judge too quickly, and to not give up on characters. Following a series over a lengthy period of months or years is itself a matter of trust.

But trust is involved at another level as well: by watching season after season of *Homeland*, the audience follows a narrative, characters, and plots that stage something to which the viewer usually does not have access. The world of intelligence normally escapes the public gaze. This means that the series familiarizes the spectator with a closed professional universe. It creates a kind of democratic inventory for a dimension of reality where power is forged.

Throughout each episode, the spectator rediscovers the double principle (identified by Niklas Luhmann) wherein familiarity is the condition for trust and trust is 'a mechanism for reducing the social complexity of the modern world'.[25] Yet the continuity of democratic life needs this trust. Trust is its very foundation, as John Dewey says:

> we have had the habit of thinking of democracy as a kind of political mechanism that will work as long as citizens were reasonably faithful in performing political duties. Of late years we have heard more and more frequently that this is not enough; that democracy is a way of life.[26]

At the same time, this reasonable trust is not a definitive fact. It needs to be maintained by a shared experience and nourished by the possibility of ordinary conversations:

> Democracy as a personal, individual way of life involves nothing fundamentally new. But when applied, it puts a new practical meaning in old ideas. Put into effect, it signifies that current enemies of democracy can be successfully countered only through the creation of personal attitudes in individual human beings. It means we must get over our tendency to think that democracy's defence can be found in any external means, whether military or civil, considered as separate from individual attitudes so deep-seated as to constitute personal character.[27]

In its own way, *Homeland* is a fiction that tells us about the continuity of this democratic conversation—about situations, choices, and issues that are traditionally excluded from it. The whole point of the series is to present the conflict between characters as conflicts of 'personal attitudes' and not the justification of the use of intelligence, paramilitary, or military means. This explains why, for example, Carrie continues to work in the defence of democratic values (whether through a foundation, a law firm, or the advice she can give to presidential candidate Keane) even when she is no longer employed by the CIA.

As the production of *Homeland* progressed, it actually imposed itself as an element of the debate about democracy in the United States. This debate appeared, for example, in Michael Cornfield's article 'The Political Education of "Homeland's" Carrie Mathison' in the *Washington Post*.[28] However, the debate was also relevant in each democratic country where the series was broadcast.[29] Conversation about the series thus became a common democratic experience. This experience occurred in all three senses, as Dewey put it in *Democracy and Education*: it allowed for the existence of a plurality of points of view; it constituted an alternative to or critical experience of resisting the seizure of power by experts and politicians; and it animated a conversation

about the legitimate interests and goals of the community that needed to be protected. In this way, *Homeland* confirms Dewey's thoughts about democracy. It is not merely a form of government, but a 'conjoint communicated experience'.[30]

Homeland's singular contribution to this question lies in the way that it makes trust the foundation of the democratic way of life. This narrative is constructed by interweaving levels of what could be called 'games of mistrust and trust' that amount to an education in trust. Across eight seasons, the series establishes a certain dialectic of trust and mistrust wherein the challenge is to learn how to build self-reliance and trust in others as a response to the threats posed to democratic life. This dialectic of trust is present at four different levels.

On an initial level, the dialectic unfolds in Carrie's relationship with herself: can she rely on herself? She is a brilliant agent who is suffering from mental illness. She must learn to live with her illness and use it as an advantage. Throughout the series, we witness her progress. Her character clearly stages the possibility of becoming better, both as an agent and as a person. She transforms herself in a perfectionist manner, becoming more comprehensible to the viewer over time, like the heroines whose transformations Cavell describes in the 'remarriage comedies' and melodramas he studies.[31]

The second level involves the relationship between Carrie and Saul (and the Agency, more broadly). Here, the question is: how can we trust ourselves despite the many good reasons we may have to mistrust each other? The series shows not just the fragility of trust, but also how successful intelligence work is impossible without trust. Even the CIA cannot know everything. Trust is required precisely when information is incomplete. Recurrent conversations or negotiations between Carrie and Saul represent the mechanism of trust-building, which is never simple or predetermined.

The third level lies in the relationship between the CIA and the presidency. This narrative arc runs throughout the whole series, but especially in the final two seasons. The question is: how can trust be maintained without giving in to the temptation of conspiracy? Trust is required between human beings, citizens, colleagues, but also institutions. Democracy is real not when it has the right institutions, but when these institutions function in a democratic way.

The fourth level exists in the relationship between the presidency and the people. The question here is: how can we avoid giving in to illiberal temptations and maintain mutual trust? The finale of the seventh season stages this issue (s7:e12). President Elizabeth Keane resigns in the face of growing public distrust, but her resignation creates an opportunity for her to reflect on trust as a condition for maintaining a democratic form of life. She shows how doubt and mistrust lead to division, which then becomes a weapon for the enemies of democracy. Thus, the issue is how to trust each other while also acknowledging self-reliance. The series presents several versions of characters who manage to overcome the fear of 'the other' and

the temptation to deny this fear, such as Carrie Mathison, Nicholas Brody, Saul Berenson, and Peter Quinn. When the character of President Keane decides to resign (s7:e12), she makes the choice after uncovering the possibility of self-expression free from the fear that made her give in to illiberal temptation.

So, what measure of trust can we experience in *Homeland*? *Homeland* provides the possibility to explain trust, to explain the reasons for it, in an open conversation. Trust is not a single decision. It is given to and received from another in the moment that each expresses their own voice.

Homeland offers more to viewers than the realism of the work of CIA agents. It is distinguished by the realism of the moral experience in terms of what constitutes the main moral resource in the fight against terrorism. We can have all the security services and carry out all the military actions we want. But without self-reliance or trust in others (and especially trust in others' self-reliance), without the conversation that makes it possible to share a common conscience, we will not be able to fight effectively against the fear of 'the other', fear of an attack, and internal or external threats to democracy.

Through such games of trust and mistrust, we come to think of trust as the spectacle of characters with the capacity for change. They are able to trust each other where they were once distrustful, or able to distrust what once seemed unquestionable. Eventually, they are able to question, clarify, and express their own *experience*. This is the key to the relationship between Carrie and Saul; all the other relationships in the series are serial variations of this process. Cavell defines adult education specifically as the ability to change: 'in this light, philosophy becomes the education of grownups … The anxiety in teaching, in serious communication, is that I myself require education. And for grownups, this is not natural growth, but change.'[32]

If Cavell is interested in cinema and in the popular comedies and melodramas of the 1940s, it is precisely because they represent characters who change, who try to express their own experience more precisely, who are looking for their own voice, underneath the voice of their functions. They thus constitute for us experiences of education as self-transformation. In their own ways, both Laugier[33] and Shuster[34] show how this philosophy of education through or with cinema is, today, made relevant through or with the television series, especially due to their length.

From the first to the final episode of *Homeland*, this game of different forms of trust constitutes the moral field for the series itself—as well as the basis of a moral experience for its viewer. The problem of this moral experience can be formulated as follows: on the one hand, lack of trust makes living together impossible and leaves room for fear of 'the other'; on the other hand, overconfidence makes it impossible to see danger and represents a new kind of threat. So, democracy needs us to clarify, day after day, the reasons for our trust in our way of life, and more precisely, in our democratic and ordinary way of life. Watching *Homeland*, watching Carrie and Saul's

own questions and clarifications, can help us interrogate the way a democracy has chosen to face new kinds of threats.

Conclusion

Due to its subject matter, the power of its characters, and the effectiveness of its narrative, *Homeland* established itself as a 'good series' for critics and viewers alike. What seems important for us to underline in conclusion is how a series—one that stages the work of CIA agents, written in collaboration with the CIA, born within the framework of the war on terror and which could therefore be suspected of being a propaganda work—actually can constitute an authentic democratic resource.

How the series was received and fed into ordinary conversations, made visible in journalistic criticism, is an example of democratic conversation. When *Homeland* was released, it was immediately positioned in relation to *24*. It was contrasted with a series that also started from the framework of the war on terror, but which had been strongly criticized for its legitimization of undemocratic means (such as torture) and for its ideological hegemony. As *New Yorker* critic Emily Nussbaum wrote after seeing the first few episodes, "'Homeland" [is] the antidote for "24".'[35]

For the viewers of *Homeland*, following its characters over ninety-six episodes is an act of learning to trust them—yet a form of trust with eyes wide open to the issues and the complexity of what is represented on screen. An experience is important not because it conforms to reality, but because it can change what is called reality. And that is the specific power of fiction—especially popular fiction, including a complex, temporally extended example such as a television series.

Notes

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16 Macé, 'Des cadres de guerre vulnérables?'.
17 Holland, 'Constructing Counter-Terrorism'.
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28 Michael Cornfield, 'The Political Education of "Homeland's" Carrie Mathison', *Washington Post*, December 26, 2014.
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30 John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (Sterling: Stylus Publishing, 2018), chapter 7.
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32 Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 1–2.
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