

I try to make art that is off the grid in terms of characters who inhabit landscapes—landscapes that demand a vision of ethics, creativity, curiosity, and an urgency toward daily life that matters to them, the characters, and that, in turn, might equally matter to the reader and the framework of their peculiarities and what is imagined, risked, and brought to actively being alive. I often think, in this, about the 9/11 Commission Report's authorship of its conclusions about Imagination: "We believe that the 9/11 attacks revealed four kinds of failures in imagination, policy, capabilities, and management."

Section "11.1" of this document titled "IMAGINATION" further states, "considering what was not done suggests possible ways to institutionalize imagination ... It is therefore crucial to find a way of routinizing, even bureaucratizing the exercise of imagination ..."

I write in absolute opposition to this scale of commissionings and their implications. The opening passages to my latest novel, generously published in the *Notre Dame Review*, reflects two childrens' experience of the national security state in the initial years of the Cold War. The issue is how one might enact as a novelist an urgency both named and invited, and which excites "historical, spatial, ethical" regions that test the drastic possibilities of knowledge that can and must matter, and that will relieve, forever, the toxic rot of "Section 11.1" and its now more than ever sought for codes.

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