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Technology, technicity and time:
Reanimating old questions for film and media theory
in the wake of Stiegler's philosophical activism

Patrick Crogan

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Introduction

Cormac invited me on the basis of my involvements in an 'interdisciplinary' range of screen-based audiovisual media works and I see from the program there will be papers across a similar spectrum of film, televisual and 'new media' forms. Looking forward to learning more about the screen studies context here, esp. about the Irish surf movie….

SLIDE: Interdisciplinary flexibility vs disciplinary solidity/strength
So I am hoping my keynote
SLIDE
will offer a suitably resonant prevailing tone or theme for us constituted here as we are for this couple of days as a collective hoping to make a kind of 'music' together.

Just on this definition's example, if 'individuality was the keynote of the 90s' (as it was perhaps for much of the 20th century), we are paying for that now in the 21st century. Today, then, it is all the more important to make the relationship of individuals to others, to their collectives, locally, internationally, globally; to make what Bernard Stiegler calls 'individuation' the keynote. (In fact, Stiegler takes this

term from Gilbert Simondon, influential philosopher of technology with whom he has individuated his thought – but more of this in a while).

Also, more on the 'keynote' because of the way it as a term couches our coming together – our conference, or seminar – from seminarium, the training of clerics as 'seed planting', as a collective musical effort. Not so much because this conjures pleasant notions of a harmonious combination of intellectual voices in choral communion – for discord and counter tones are equally important in the 'music' of rigorous scholarly investigation. But more because the notion of a musical development speaks to the temporal and processual nature of thought, of dialogue and debate, of the revision and prospective tracing of positions, and of the efforts to synthesize, summarise and mobilise these. It speaks to the dynamic of individuation through which interpretations of the changing objects of our inquiry are established, challenged, revised, and reinvented in the mutual becoming of individuals and disciplinary collectives. We will see that this musical theme is not irrelevant to my topic today.

So I have already begun proposing certain key concepts I have taken from Stiegler's work on technology, technicity and time which have influenced my work over the last decade or so. To a significant degree Stiegler's philosophy of technology has provided me the means for a retrospective synthesis of my peripatetic wanderings across various film and media forms, one which was launched in a film studies milieu already heavily accented by 'continental' thinkers such as Derrida, Deleuze, Lyotard, Virilio, Baudrillard and Heidegger. What I will try to do today is provide an account of this synthesising rationale, its theoretical tenets and cultural political implications. My subtitle indicates the character and significance of this I hope to communicate in the context of this seminar, such as I understand its project and purview. For, like other important theoretical projects of the post-70s crystallising of 'Film theory' as something of an established disciplinary entity, Stiegler's work opens the way to another understanding of and another critical and indeed cultural intervention in the predominant audiovisual media of individuation today by reposing some old questions about the nature of film and media. Reposing here means to ask them differently, about different audiovisual media, and so to reanimate the questioning which is both a pathway backwards to these old questions and their answers and

forwards to new scopings of the challenges and possibilities of the audiovisual media. I hope, then, to take you on the both retrospective and prospective 'ride' my own encounter with Stiegler's work has occasioned for me.

Old Questions
SLIDE
So here are some media 'objects' I have taught and/or presented or published on over the years: Films, dvds, youtube videos, video games, military appropriations (or re-appropriations) of interactive media technologies.

This is a range of things evidencing particular interests and trajectories of my own, but also like or unlike those of many here perhaps, according to your pathways from undergraduate to postgraduate and beyond via the demands of various and increasingly 'flexible' teaching contracts, an ever-expanding gamut of academic journals and conferences, and so on. Now, there is a generational dimension to the formation and negotiation of legitimate objects of scholarly inquiry – this is another aspect of the temporality of individuation Stiegler proposes as a crucial question in fostering cultural and critical renewal). A generational dimension as well, that is, as the economic dimension, but the two are intimately co-implicated in Stiegler's analysis. The 'economic' mostly means today, in this context of university research and knowledge stewardship and 'advancement', the neoliberal capitalist mobilisation of university education as globally competitive enterprise, something which my own 'university', a 'post-92' institution in the English parlance, suffers acutely from.

SLIDE: INDUSTRIAL TEMPORAL OBJECTS

Now all of these are industrially produced media, and they make possible experiences for individuals and groups of people. And the novelty, specificity and significance of this capacity to industrially produce and, of course, reproduce on a mass scale objects that provide experiences are some of the 'old questions' alluded to in my title. Old questions that were addressed firstly by film and then media studies, and before these disciplines were established by other scholars, artists and intellectuals approaching film, radio and the gramophone in the early decades of the twentieth century from

philosophy, psychology, aesthetics and sociology (among other fields). The history of film theory—or of theorisations of film – could be categorised according to responses to these old questions. For instance, 'film studies' was established in the academy in the 1960s on an auteurist model that legitimated the analysis of film in a way that emulated Literature's treatment of poetry, drama and the novel, combining the formation of a 'canon' of worthy films and directors with a cultural historical perspective linking cinema to the progression of other modernist artistic movements and cultural moments. The notion of film as contemporary expressive vehicle of Romantic aesthetics, of industrial heir of the already massively circulating novel and literary text, was aggressively challenged by the Marxist post-structuralist, psychoanalytic cine-semiotics that became the next 'orthodoxy' of film studies when this politically engaged confluence of theories found its home in the newest and most 'immediate' subject area in the politically radicalised context of the post-May 68 anglo-french humanities. Since then other major disagreements over the answers to the questions about film's industrial and technological nature, specificity and significance have arisen, such as Deleuze's provocative rejection of the structuralist linguistic basis of cine-semiotic theory for missing something unmissable (in his Bergsonist view) in coming to terms with film's potential as a philosophical medium: the movement which no structural analysis can adequately deal with or even recognise as such. Or the cognitive and analytic philosophical 'rejection' of the 'grand theory' of cinema's nature and significance for human psychic and collective progress.

I am remaining strictly 'neutral' here to avoid going down other long and quite different paths, so as to stick to my promise to say something about Stiegler's approach to these old questions. The key point I want to make for now is that film and media have always been in question at this level of 'basic' questions; something which I imagine we all know. Even the emergence of media studies, with its wider field of interests in television, radio and music, and print and advertising media etc, already represented an important reframing of questions shared with film studies through its Marxist critical theory frameworks and psychoanalytic and feminist interrogations of mass mediated cultural experience.

SLIDE: new forms like tumblr etc

And in a fairly obvious sense it is necessary and right that these old questions be re-posed and that other ways of answering them be suggested and tested, given that the sphere of audiovisual technoculture is to say the least, dynamic. What 'film' and media are as institutional, economic and technological phenomena have been at best 'metastable' rather than stable. Metastable: that is, relatively stable but also relatively unstable, and far more so as products of the modern industrial age, than the more metastable cultural forms they pushed aside such as the novel, theatre, and painting/graphic arts (but even these have their histories of transformation, and each of these are also taken up and refigured or 'reanimated' in what might be called the 'digital transition'. Indeed the challenge for 'we' engaged in the task of coming to terms with film and media in this constantly transforming media-scape is aporetic; how to move both quickly and slowly at the same time? How to account for the novelty, the changes, the unprecedented, based on existing interpretative frameworks that are constantly being challenged for their pertinence, while at the same time recognising that nothing new (neither in theory nor in practice) is totally unprecedented, but an iteration of existing notions, processes and materialities? (I called this the 'aporia of speed' after Virilio and Derrida in my PhD....cf my piece in *Theory, Culture and Society*).

(REFER TO SLIDE)

So, here are various developments in 'social media', pervasive or ubiquitous media, and what might be called 'antisocial' media (the creation of a private space that overrules the 'public sphere'), and emerging compositions of interactive digital media with disconcertingly real world deployments of the 'virtual' experience of video game interfaces: how do all and each of these change the nature and potentialities of industrially produced mediation? How and in what ways are existing conceptions of film and other media forms relevant and applicable to these? To what extent do each or all of these demand a reconceptualization of the industrial mediation of experience?

THIS IS where Stiegler offers, and has provided me, valuable orienting perspectives. Central to these is his account of industrial mediation as the production of 'industrial temporal objects'. I will endeavour to unpack this richly resourced notion in the time

remaining. Stiegler draws on Husserl's account of the experience of time (or 'time consciousness') in enacting his post-phenomenological re-making of the theory of 'animated sound-images'. In the course of this it will be necessary to explain Stiegler's interest in film and media, which goes beyond a disciplinary or even interdisciplinary set of concerns about the definition of the object or objects of study and what can be said about them. This is why I referred to Stiegler's philosophical activism in my title, as his account of film and media is central to his project to make philosophy act in and on the course of contemporary events. This is because media are absolutely crucial to the 'course of contemporary events' as he and many others recognise. In *Taking Care*, for instance, Stiegler suggests that what is equally or perhaps even more necessary today is a deliberate and systematic effort like that made to put the emerging crisis of 'our' natural environment on the agenda of public and policy debate, in school and university curricula and so forth, but one for the mediatic environment in which our experiences, our memories, dreams and desires are formed and 'nurtured', one which is in his account increasingly polluted and even systemically poisoned and poisonous, toxic for individual psyches and for the cultural and political collectives they constitute. That was written a few years ago, and perhaps the now evident 'failure' of this effort to impact in any substantial way on the practices contributing to global warming is evidence *not that it is too late*, or that 'there is no alternative' to globalised hypercapitalist exploitation of all resources human and otherwise, *but that* the mediatic milieu is a more fundamental problem to address for any effort to make a significant impact on the course of events today.

Industrial Temporal Objects

So what are industrial temporal objects? They are produced on the basis of technological artefacts, exterior, material forms that Stiegler in his philosophy of technology categorises as mnemo-technologies. (Mnemo- as in memory – which is why I prefer to pronounce it as 'memo'). Remembering technologies, industrial reinventions of earlier mnemo-*technics* such as writing, painting and figurative arts, graphic inscriptions, jewellery and bodily decoration, music, dance and song, myth-making and ritual forms, and so on. And these mnemo-technics, this long tradition of forms which the industrial audiovisual and now digital mnemotechnologies inherits and re-animates, these were themselves invented and emerged in the mists of time as a specific iteration of the general capacity of technical objects to store lived

experience in exterior, spatialised forms. A capacity to act, that is, as a memory prosthesis enabling the transmission of ways of living from those that once lived to inheritors and 'adopters' who are able to access experiences they did not themselves have.

SLIDES OF CUTTING MACHINES

This prosthesis, this prosthetic, supplementary effect is for Stiegler at the heart of the 'human'. Stiegler, responding to the exclusion of technics from most of the course of Western philosophical inquiry, argues for 'technicity' as the irreducible condition for human being, the being for whom its being is a question as Heidegger characterised it. The human must be understood as inessential, as a being-in-default of an essence, Stiegler claims in *Technics and Time 1*. The 'human' does not exist as either a transcendental ontological category or as an established, permanent outcome of natural evolution; it is, rather historical, a becoming, at best metastable, and always composed in and through a dynamic with technical becoming. This becoming is an epi-phylogenetic process, bio-technical, cultural-natural, where the cultural—which is always technocultural inasmuch as it is supported and conditioned by exterior artefacts, has become the dominant partner, reversing in recent millennia the relationship between the natural milieu and the technical milieu which incorporates the former, for better and for worse.

The 'object' in 'industrial temporal object' is, then, both exterior and interior; it refers to the experience produced through an encounter with an industrially produced media form such as a film or a gramophone record – the encounter with which was the first such 'object'.

SLIDE HMV:

SLIDE BLACK MARIA STUDIO

(And we should also note that the cinema emerged in part as a supplement to Edison's phonograph, as the most significant outcome of the one of the earliest examples of the industrial R&D lab Edison set up to drive technological innovation).

The dog, Nipper, re-members the voice of the master now from the grave (Nipper is 'human'): this intuition of the significance of the industrial registration of a lived past and its potential to reanimate what was once alive was far more immediate at the time of the emergence of industrial media such as the gramophone and of course photography.

SLIDE SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY

The unprecedented, 'uncanny' power of these new 'objective' forms was, however, a novel iteration of the mnemotechnical function which was to make the ghosts of the past accessible to 'us' through mnemotechnical artefactuality: the media are this past as exterior memory. Culture reproduces and transforms itself only on this artefactual basis or 'substrate' as Stiegler calls it. (But it is never 'neutral', and our access is never 'objective' but always 'performative', re-animating. The apparent 'objectivity' of the archive of recordings, photographic and cinematic images, and so forth is both its greatest potential and its greatest challenge for 'us' inasmuch as we have to figure out how to 'inherit' it. That is, how to adopt it, how to selectively employ the potential of this archive and the digital technologies for accessing, editing, manipulating and distributing it. We will need to return to this point as it is central to Stiegler's concerns).

So, industrial *temporal objects*: this term, 'temporal object' is Husserl's, the 'father of phenomenology'. He used it to specify a kind of phenomenon, an object of consciousness, that takes time to be constituted as a complete object. While every object is 'temporal' inasmuch as it is experienced temporally, and can and will alter over time, Husserl distinguishes a specific kind of phenomenon in a series of essays eventually edited together in *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*. Examining a 'temporal object' will enable him to analyse how consciousness constitutes time in general, to establish the 'eidetic structure' of time consciousness operating at the phenomenological level he is concerned with as he seeks to establish the key precepts of his new approach to philosophical inquiry. A song or melody is Husserl's prime example. A melody takes time to be constituted. Until the last note is heard one does not know what the melody is in its entirety. Husserl's analysis of the

'mechanism' consciousness deploys to 'capture' the melody – as one would say today – is what Stiegler takes and then modifies in formulating his 'post-phenomenological' account of industrial temporal objects.

This mechanism deploys two kinds of memory or 'retention': primary and secondary. Secondary retention corresponds to the ordinary notion of memory as recollection where past experiences are retained in consciousness and can be recalled to mind. Primary retention is Husserl's 'discovery' and it is a form of retention that operates in the present time of perception to enable the successive moments of a temporal object to join up to constitute a complete and unitary phenomenon. It is on the basis of primary retention that secondary retention as the recall of past experience can function, and it is the combination of these two, ordering the dynamic of perception and recollection in consciousness, that enables it to synthesize and moderate its permanent flow by recalling, reflecting and revising itself.

Stiegler acknowledges this analysis of two kinds of retention, one not quite memory but still a kind of memory, the other memory with the ability to influence the living present of consciousness that recalls it from out of the past, as Husserl's unique contribution to the question of temporal experience. Before going on to his critique of the limitations of Husserl's account, limitations which Stiegler suggests should have been apparent even to Husserl who was developing these ideas at a time when the gramophone player was 'all the rage', I need to give an (all too brief) account of the complex operation of primary retention. Stiegler spends a whole chapter of *Technics and Time 2* on this, and then reprises and extends the analysis further in the opening chapters of *Technics and Time 3* in relation to his analysis of 'the time of cinema', so you can guess that it is quite crucial for his project. And it is on the point of complexity, and of Husserl's efforts to contain and reduce it, that Stiegler's critique and his investment in the idea of 'industrial temporal objects' rests.

Too briefly, then, primary retention enables the listener (to stay with Husserl's chief example) it enables the listener to maintain the individual tones together as the elements of an unfolding melody. As this description suggests, primary retention has in fact two temporal dimensions: the retentional that retains *in modified form* the preceding tones like a 'comet's tail' in each new moment of the listening, and a

'protentional' dimension which is anticipating the ensuing tone as part of the complete melody.

SLIDE PSYCHO POV SETUP (the protention of a shot never delivered by H)

SLIDE KULESHOV EFFECT

As Stiegler argues in *Technics and Time 3*, the Kuleshov effect both 'proves' Husserl's account of primary retention and points to its limitations. For it shows that perception is protentional, anticipating what will come next as completing a sequence sustained over the course of the succeeding moments of the phenomenon. But it also shows that perception is never a pure, objective, and neutral 'capture' of what is before intentional consciousness as phenomenon. The spectator 'sees' different shots of the actor Mosjoukine despite being shown exactly the same shot. That is, despite seeing the industrially produced *and exactly reproduced* projection of the same photogrammes of the actor's face in close-up.

In Stiegler's account Husserl's analysis indicates he was not completely unaware of the implication of this for an understanding of perception: for instance, for Husserl the 'comet's tail' of past tones is subject to ongoing modification at each moment of the listening, suggesting that perception is continually transforming its constitution of the melody within the course of its audition, based on how each new tone either confirms or deviates from what was expected (as in *Psycho's* undelivered upon promise of a shot of the naked Marion Crane/Janet Leigh on her way to the shower). But Husserl's ambition here is to establish phenomenology on a solid basis, and key to this was the legitimacy of the phenomenological object of study, namely, the phenomenon as perceived by intentional consciousness. This leads him to insist on the absolute opposition between perception and the imaginative and reflective functions of consciousness that work on the phenomena delivered to them by perception. (cf his rejection of Brentano's position which begins the analysis). Perception delivers objects to consciousness free of the subjective and idiosyncratic taints of individualised experience. It is not affected by memories or the imagination in its primary 'capture' of phenomena.

[It is in fact precisely the notion of recording/storage that is subsequently articulated in digital computer theory and then design. And one could say that the tension

between a Husserlian phenomenological and a Stieglerian post-phenomenological account of perception and memory is one way to characterise 'our' contemporary technocultural moment in which a decisive transformation of the dynamics between exterior, artificial and interior, 'human' intelligence is underway, and in which the composition of automation and autonomy is reaching a critical phase of destabilisation across so many fields.]

Now, if as I just said perception is continually transforming its constitution of the melody within the course of its audition, the question that arises is what are the criteria informing this process of permanent modification? For Stiegler the answer must involve the recognition that secondary and primary retention are different but not completely opposed; that it is the memory of other songs that conditions perception, that one anticipates the structure and the sequence of the song based on this. How could primary retention, working 'alone' on the basis of its extremely short-term memory only, possibly intuit and project the future course of the melody it is hearing always 'for the first time' as it were?

Moreover, what allows consciousness to mark the very commencement of the melody-to-come with a first modifying retention of the 'just past' in the present moment? It must be, argues Stiegler, the memory of other songs that conditions perception so that upon the sounding of the first tone 'music' is anticipated and the retentional/protentional mechanism is set in train. (Think for instance of the generational differences in musical culture and how an older 'ear' may not even recognise the first sounding of a piece of electronic or 'acid house' music as 'music' but as some computerised signalling of function, say.) The ear is 'originarily musical' says Stiegler in summarising his critique of Husserl on this point. Which is to say originarily culturally, historically and indeed, technically trained and conditioned.

For Stiegler then, primary and secondary retention, and perception and imagination are certainly different, but never absolutely opposed. Rather they must be understood as composed in a complex spiralling process rather than the more Euclidean, linear schema Husserl proposes:

SLIDE HUSSERL'S DIAGRAMS

This complexity brings the social, the technical and the exterior in general into the formation of experience and the lived experience of time at a constitutive level.

SLIDE: QUOTE

If perception is originarily cultural, one's individual consciousness develops in a dynamic with one's collectives in and through the technical and particularly the mnemotechnical forms which mediate and condition all of the perceptions that the living present can turn into the synthesising flux of its temporal existence. Here Stiegler's critique of Husserlian phenomenology turns into his post-phenomenological claim about the need to think the interior dynamic of primary and secondary retention on the basis of what he calls 'tertiary retention', that retention made available to the interior process via the exterior forms of technocultural artefactuality.

The analysis of the hearing of a particular piece of music by a particular individual assumes its full complexity when understood as a dynamic of the three kinds of retention, underwritten by the third which is to this extent 'primary'.[1] The same with film and all the industrial temporal objects which have become the prevailing form of tertiary retention. With the Kuleshov experiment, for example, it can be recalled that Mosjoukine was a well known melodramatic actor and this would have played its part in people's expectations of different dramatic reactions readable in his face, along with their familiarity with the significance of the 'close up' in a film.

And we recognise that the moment from *Psycho* is constructed on the basis of these same established conventions of film genre, narration and presentation or 'monstration' (as André Gadreault would have it): the 'film language' that Christian Metz and co were exploring as a conceptual hypothesis and a descriptive and analytical method. On another register, what is perhaps less apparent to a viewer of the film today is how Hitchcock was at this moment (as elsewhere in the film) bringing the spectator performatively to the edge of cinematic 'propriety'. This is less

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[1] This is in effect Stiegler's adoption of Heidegger's argument about how dasein is always already oriented in facticity; that facticity is both there 'before' dasein – in its future – and constitutive of its 'past' in an originary way. See TT1, pp.…

apparent, perhaps, to an 'uneducated' viewer ignorant of *Psycho's* place in the history of cinema. The complexity of both viewer and film are involved in the experience of the work. On the side of the film, as with other works of 'art', the greater its complexity the richer its potential value and legacy as mnemotechnical resource; that is, the more able it will be to offer insights and value to successive generations returning to reanimate it. To reanimate here means to bring it back to life in the living present, in a new experience born of its recomposition by new consciousnesses themselves composed in new contexts. And this is how the past is re-activated, set in motion again in the world , playing its part in and as cultural renewal and transformation.

Historical, cultural and individual differences condition perception, even of these industrially produced, exactly identical material artefacts.[2] This a crucial point for Stiegler's philosophy of lived experience, and in broad terms it is a claim shared with the intellectual currents of film and media and cultural studies. If he arrives at a similar 'endpoint', however, he does so by reposing the old questions and answering them differently, so as to bring into focus the technicity at the heart of human historical and cultural becoming. This allows him to recast the diagnosis of the contemporary technocultural moment and to propose a different response to it critically and in activist terms.

Again, the characterisation of the present is similar but the analysis leads to different conclusions. If cultural and contextual differences condition us more than biological determinants, and individuals and cultural groups construct the significance of their experiences in and through these differences, the default mobilisation of this industrial productivity in the age of modern capitalism has been, however, toward the standardising of experience and the 'automating' of responses to media forms. From radio and film's unprecedented 'power to convince' and the global reach, through to the increasingly pervasive and permanent penetration of experience by ubiquitous,

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[2] Now there is a legitimate question here about if and whether any particular film screening or playback of music etc is exactly the same thing, that artefactual and contextual variations are always playing a part in differentiating the phenomenon (a point well made by Jose van Dijck in her *Mediated Memories in the Digital Age* book). Perhaps, but this is not a critical challenge to Stiegler's major claims here inasmuch as he is characterising how the technicity of human experience means that perception is techno-culturally conditioned on an individual, psychic level.

realtime digital media, the capacity to mass produce and distribute devices promising the same kinds of experiences is more or less a given today. This is what Stiegler calls the 'passive synthesis' (again borrowing and reactivating a term from Husserl) around industrial media as temporal objects, that is the conventional or 'default' mode of their production and use. Today is marked by what he describes as the 'becoming temporal object of everything' for the purposes of marketing and promotion of the permanent innovation in the commercial exploitation of all spheres of living.

SLIDE OF MATCH.COM and Habbo Hotel

This passive synthesis of analogue industrial and now 'analogico-digital' industrial mediation is what Stiegler is seeking to analyse in such as way as to provide the best means for intervening in its default repetition and reproduction. This is the goal of the philosophical side of his philosophico-activist project: To develop a critical reinterpretation of the predominantly capitalist and more recently neoliberal capitalist adoption of the power and potential of industrial mediation. For Stiegler, following critical evolutionary anthropologist André Leroi-Gourhan, these media amount to a crucial 'phase-change' in the possibilities of human technocultural becoming, one with inevitably global implications, and bearing a profound challenge to established forms of ethno-cultural identity formation and continuity; indeed, the challenge is to reinvent these forms in a post-'blood and soil' default mode (as he suggests in *Technics and Time 2*).

The parallels with classic critiques of capitalist modernity, including Adorno and Horkheimer's account of the culture industry and its 'reification' of consumer-subjects, and – closer to film studies – of Althusserian-derived ideological apparatus theory and the ideological interpretation of mainstream cultural production more generally should be apparent here. Stiegler discusses the kulturkritik in *Technics and Time 3* to situate his approach as both close to but different from this cultural Marxist tradition. In short (as time is short) while Stiegler's account shares with Adorno and Horkheimer's an assertion of a systematic industrial mobilisation of subjects on a mass and global scale, a mobilisation which sets out to regulate the experiences and the very time of modern consumer-subjects, he questions the curiously Kantian terms in which *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* characterises this systematicity of industrial

capitalism. Adorno and Horkheimer posit that it is as if the transcendental schemas Kant proposed are regulating people's experience of phenomena had been decoded and put to work by the commercial capitalist program. For Stiegler this ironic observation covers over a failing of this analysis to address the question of technology and the inherent technicity of human individual and social existence. For him there is no transcendental schematism of human experience. The regulation of experience and culture is an ongoing, at best metastable affair. If capitalism has indeed systematically mobilised the capacities of industrial media to coordinate consumption to production, to significant effect, it is on the very basis of the technical and hence historical, non-transcendental conditions of individual and social existence. And this does not mean they have mastered the technological instrumentation of experience design once and for all. Stiegler insists on a distinction between the systematic use of the media and its systemic possibilities. These remain open to other adoptions and other selective negotiations of their potentials and alternative uses.

Everything is at stake for him in this difference between the systemic and the systematic. This is why he insists on the need for a critical reappraisal of technoculture to inform and to compose itself with efforts to redesign media, to 'make films' differently, to develop counter 'solutions' to social networking, knowledge production, searching the internet, to devise new forms of collective annotation and interpretation of media works, to mobilise the potentials of the global realtime media for critical dialogue and collaboration, to name a few. And to agitate for political discussion and policy formation on these questions in order to address the systematic, default modes of the reproduction of existing models of the industrial mediation of production, distribution and marketing.

Moreover, Stiegler's diagnosis of contemporary globalising technoculture (focussed mostly on how 'we' in the 'advanced industrial economies' experience it today) suggests less that the systematic efforts of capital have mastered the production of subjective experience and desire but that this effort is producing greater and greater levels of disenchantment, of cynicism and nihilism, and is spiralling towards an increasingly dangerous breakdown of the very dynamics of individual and collective co-becoming sustaining the very capitalist system itself. *Acting Out*, *Taking Care*, the *Symbolic Misery* and *Disbelief and Discredit* series and, more recently, *States of*

Shock, develop this diagnosis. The breakdown of this dynamic leads to extreme processes where the dynamics of individuation – which negotiate between the collective synchronisations of behaviour and belief and the individual's differentiating 'diachronizing' adoptions and deviations from collective norms – play out in exacerbated hyper-synchronizations (all kinds of extremisms, fascisms, fundamentalisms, criminal sub-cultures, cults, and automatisms of all kinds, consumerist, military and security, etc) and hyper-diachronizations (mass shootings and actings out of impotence of all kinds, cynical financial speculation, social media harassment, anti-social acts). War, chaos, social breakdown and destruction ensues.

We are out of time; sorry to be finishing on a rather gloomy 'note', but this keynote has tried to offer a rendition of Stiegler's key themes and motives/motifs. So it is important to evoke the dark tones in his account of our contemporary moment where we the 'living present' find ourselves, surrounded by industrial temporal objects which sound ambivalently in his ongoing work, as both our poison and our only source of a cure. Culture is a pharmacological therapeutics. The place of critical inquiry into film and media is of paramount importance in developing this therapeutics as an effective response to the 'digital transition'. A treatment regime or 'programme' must always be well informed by a rigorous and continually renewed theoretical dialogue, must have its own vital and collectively composed 'soundtrack'.