

Whose body can do more

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Introduction

“The artist is the master of objects; he puts before us shattered, burned, broken-down objects, converting them to the regime of desiring-machines, breaking down is part of the very functioning of desiring-machines; the artist presents paranoiac machines, miraculating-machines, and celibate machines as so many technical machines, so as to cause desiring-machines to undermine technical machines.” (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, p. 32)

Art is entangled with technology; with its upstream root of *technè*¹, as any artisan or craftsman will surely avow, whose mark is the signature; the territory of an artist’s hand. To be *able* is in many ways already to be an artist; conveying is a simple function, but doing so requires skill.

How should these intersect — the artist, territory and technology, in entanglement — for an artistic practice of *disability*? Both for the disabled artist, who cannot act unhindered, or may be unable to speak and write in civil ways; but also for the emancipation or dissolution of disability itself.

Resolving *technè* from art, or more simply put, albeit crass: to separate it fully from craft — cannot be done in a dissimilar mode to regular artistic production. We cannot do so by administrative, extrasocial means; as this would further reinstate its place in art to the extrinsic, and would ensure its need for oversight and exemption on a case-to-case basis.

It also cannot be systemic, like efforts made for reinclusion of socially alienated bodies, who were separated by systemic means. The entanglement of art with social production acts in similar ways, but is a fundamentally different kind of repression, as it occurs through ontology; not teleology.

Using *Anti-Oedipus* by Deleuze and Guattari (2009) we will examine *excellence*, technology and the *abilifying* of production in art and daily life. We will explore how a drive for excellence is a *forward* movement; where the boundary for this direction is determined, and must inevitably conclude.

In other words, we will examine the locality of *perfection*, as a term of movement, and in terms of the bodies who have been subjected to its aspiration. We shall find no answer to these questions, of course, but their answers would be questions in themselves.

¹ “[The Greek word] *technê* is [most often] translated as either craft or art.” See Parry 2020.

Technology

Epistography

“Nature builds no machines [...] These are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature, or of human participation in nature. They are *organs of the human brain, created by the human hand*; the power of knowledge, objectified.”
(Marx 2005, p. 706)

Even simple mechanical devices will act as archival stores of knowledge. The expertise required for their design, assembly and operation makes them latent extensions of their manufacturers' ability.

Manufacturing *mechanism* is to record physical, haptic knowledge as repeatable movement. This movement must be known to its engineers, to identify failure or make improvements, and must therefore also be knowable — introducing an intellectual limit of their capacity, while embedding an epistemological delineation.

Machines which perform imperceptible or inconceivable action cannot be engaged with *as machines* by a visitor layman; someone unaware of its schematic. The machine will then instead become a *black box*, whose viable use is only that of a tool. In non-elect activation, as a mere tool, the machine becomes a mere object: like books for the illiterate.

The separation of the machine and its schematic, not unlike the map and its territory, therefore lies in an empowered—*proprietary*—use. To engage it *illicitly*, however, with no concern of mechanism, is strictly necessary to direct its action towards an operable, material result.

Bewildered mechanics could surely drive a car, for a short while, by reading measurements of tire pressure or clutch heat dissipation, but it will give them little insight in the way of the (machinic secondary) objective of a car, their transportation.

As the two modes are reversible, the illicit and empowered activation of machines, both can easily be done by a single actor. But since the cost to traverse them is dramatically asymmetrical; to momentarily disregard a schematic will take far less effort than to reconstruct it; machine objects will cause the natural formation of a power structure.

Technology

Technolalia

Technology is a displacement of the body. A latent amplification of human conduct or production. Machines will dislocate our knowledge and ability as grafts, on a provisional body made of steel or plastic, lines of ink or metal pressed to silicone. The body of provision is detached from our power and must find its own, this allows amplification, but will also set it free to become a part of others.

Grafted is a *black box*, made to hold the record of a single movement or a single thought, with an inlet for its substitutive power, which will reproduce a mimicked action. These may be displaced and moved in docile states; repaired, exchanged, destroyed and rebuilt: and they can be forgotten — misremembered, deduced, undocumented or obfuscated.

Technology is therefore also a language, whose morphemes are transcriptions of human abilities, and whose message is their replication. A language, whose lexemes have enveloped over time, to form complexities of themselves: A *tool* is congregated into *mechanism*, *mechanisms* aggregated to *machines*, *machines* generalized to *systems*, and so on.

“[...] every machine functions as a break in the flow in relation to the machine to which it is connected, but at the same time is also a flow itself, or the production of a flow, in relation to the machine connected to it. This is the law of the production of production.”

(Deleuze and Guattari 2009, p. 36)

Technology is equally a social apparatus — the impetus, or driving force of many dislocated bodies connected in opaque substrates, who conspire to adjoin in unitary movement. A vector field whose forces are invoked in every direction: into-, out-of- human bodies and their reproducing grafts, who in consort have been made equal parts of a larger whole.

A mass-machine, directing flows of human work and thought or reproduction, where every inward action has an equal but opposite reaction. Reforming it results in *change* occurring twice; once on itself, once back on us. To engage this substrate has become involuntary: mandatory for survival and social participation, but every step we reach into it deeper, it roots once deeper into us.

Technology

Teratology

Where is it heading; what would a *techno-social* complex even desire?

Technology desires *industry* — it is entwined with it: *it is development*.

When it is granted industry it will not cease. When it is made into a mass-industrial complex, and intertwined with every territory of human life; become inseparable with life itself — When it has decontextualized the realms of social production with those of the industrial; has made the bedroom become the workplace, the office become the day-care center, and the school, the academy, become certificate mills; even then it will not stop.

The post-industrial urge of technology is the *abilifying* of foreign things; to keep extending beyond the capabilities of any human body. It is a demystification, by actualization, of magic; the codifying of human fantasy, proclivity and spectacle. Recommendation algorithms which normalize fascism, or our constant millimetric proximity to pornography. The generated nonsensical item listings on shopping sites, or companies who gather extraneous data, which as of yet has no use.

Dissolution of our boundaries is inherent to expansion, in the requisition of *our* territoriality. A requisite, as such, only for having been granted expansion rights into our homes and life, by having bribed us with the prospect of a similar optimization to recreation, as it had done to manufacture.

This dissolution would for Deleuze and Guattari likely constitute a *deterritorialization*. Described by Adrian Parr to be “[best] understood as a movement producing change. In so far as it operates as a line of flight, deterritorialisation indicates the creative potential of an assemblage. [To] deterritorialise is to free up the fixed relations that contain a body all the while exposing it to new organisations.” (2010)

We are indeed made free by this process. Free to work as much as we are able, free to find new forms of exploitation, of speculation, monetization and extraction. We simply happened to be unlucky enough that the creative alignment of technology was to our detriment.

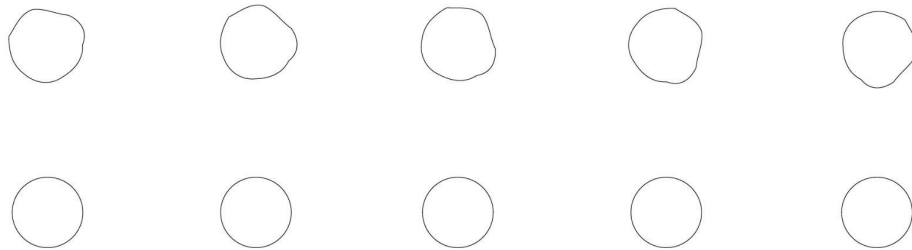
Technology has bound us into searching for a state of being that cannot exist within our body. For physical prowess, it was always willing to surpass human muscle. Thus it caused the invention of

disabled bodies, those unable to contribute to its expansion, as well as those made obsolete by its surpassment. And it will likely continue doing so in tempering the human mind.

Technology can have no end. The end would be a lack of hindrance, but what *could* be hindered is informed by its development. Eventually the baseline we expect for human function may be out of reach for the entire population. Technology will not settle to improve — it will seek to *perfect*.

Perfection

Ouroborealism



Perfection is not a state of being. It is a condition of unbecoming, and the condition is death. Only imperfection can give animation to the thing it possesses; its movement is the trace from disorder, the ability to exist in time and belong in space. Reflected it will emphasize disjunctions: textures on the hypervigilant body yearning to be smooth.

Yearning is an insurrection of supporting actors, background noise refusing silence: aspiring movie stars cast as props in city scenes, conspiring on set to form a flashmob. It is the wasted rolls of film poisoning the soil in a landfill, the lost image of extras who were left out of the joke dissolving back into themselves.

An imperfect body moving very slowly.

A perfect body moving very slowly.

‘Perfection’ is completion² — Life has only one completion. Movement cannot be complete; will not allow itself to become its history; but will disappear. To finish moving is to stop: not to *have moved*, but to *never move*. Change is not transitioning, it is happening.

² From Lat. *Parficere* (‘to finish’), see Wiktionary 2022.

Conclusion

Autistic Desire

Perfection is perhaps a condition worse than death, as unlike death it is not diametric with Life. In perfection, the total sum of a body's production will be the *production of a body*. An eventless respiration; gastro-intestinal rumble without side-effects, whose only purpose is persistence.

For Deleuze and Guattari, this is a kind of apathy, a lack of desire, but it is also the discontinued oppression of a body without organs: As in young Joey, "who can live, eat, defecate, and sleep only if he is plugged into machines," whose condition is a "[loss] of desire (which Bettelheim translates in terms of autism)." Bruno Bettelheim, Joey's therapist and psychoanalyst, calls this autistic state, a "nonproductive stasis or an attitude of total withdrawal." (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, 37)

We are asked, "How has the process of the production of desire [...] begun to turn endlessly round and round in a total vacuum, so as to produce the child-machine? How has the process turned into an end in itself? ..." The Oedipal autistic is unable to speak; and therefore arrested to desist desire. In a bed-ridden state, they refuse, or are denied, to be part of social production. However, this has also caused them to be left out from the oppression of a despot, of earth or Capital:

These, the bodies without organs, have been made unable to ascribe the autistic's product as their own, *it has none*, and where their reprehension is a fear of death; an autistic, perfect, body is not even capable of taking part in life. But we are told, "[...] It is only by means of the body without organs [...] that something is produced, counterproduced, something that diverts or frustrates the entire process of production, of which it is nonetheless still a part." (ibid, 37-38)

Being out of reach from oppression has in other words disabled the disabled body to withstand. It is excluded for the sake of being excluded, irrelevant, for not participating in its own destruction. We can therefore not rely on going outside the oppressive for emancipation, at least not according to Deleuze and Guattari. In our application of technology; art and excellence, this would imply that removing an idea of artistic *quality* is insufficient to dissuade it from exclusion. Should we decide to simply refuse its qualification, we would be entirely ignored. It should, in fact, be the very idea of quality, being what art ascribes and desires, which must somehow set us free.

Conclusion

Irrevocabulary

Sisyphus, setting out to define where his hill begins, could easily have chosen the peak of the next one. Having rolled his boulder to the valley in-between them, traversing *one length of hill*, upward in relation to the first, he retires for the day to await the gods moving his boulder back to its start.

The disentanglement of art and technology could be sought in its misuse. We could ask technology for answers adding to our confusion, manufacture devices to constrict the human body rather than extending it, and look for its breaking points and undefined behaviors, to uncodify the encoded.

Technology's drive to increase could instead be considered in fractional terms. As the growth of a larger product by divisions with the numerator one (1). Our denominator must then be a shrinking number, approaching zero — and at zero, its product is undefined. We cannot divide by zero.

$1/1$	$1/0.5$	$1/0.25$	$1/0.125$	$1/0.0625$	$1/0.03125$	$1/0.015625$	$1/0.0078125$	$1/0.00390625$
1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256

Then it will have an end; the end is our program crashing, refusing to halt; produce. Our computer becomes the autistic body, like Joey's, consuming electricity without recompense, sustained by being hooked up to supporting machines running an entire operating system, for no reason at all.



Photograph of a man or a woman.
AI Generated image © N/A 2022

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