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Foucault and Media: A Missed Encounter?

With his commitment to a "micropolitics" that locates power in the interstices of everyday life, Michel Foucault's thought would seem an ideal resource for thinking the shift from twentieth-century recording media to twenty-first-century "atmospheric" media, where precisely what is at stake, as I have argued at length elsewhere, is the predominate target of address.[1] If today's media can be distinguished from earlier media on account of their capacity to solicit our engagement beneath the threshold of attention, we can readily discern the challenges this shift poses to media theory. Nothing less is at stake here than the scale at which theory can operate: though more or less standard phenomenological models appear sufficient to theorize the coupling of human experience with "cinematic" temporal objects and other forms of recorded media, as the work of Bernard Stiegler has forcefully demonstrated,[2] today's dispersed media would seem to require a more flexible model, one capable of addressing sensory experience at microtemporal, pre-perceptual levels and, in some sense, independent of their contributions to higher-order "lived experiences" and "contents of consciousness."

Given Foucault's singular appreciation for

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the heterogeneity and multiscale range of any operation of power, together with his antipathy to orthodox phenomenological conceptions of agency, his final conceptualization of subjectification would appear to provide just what is necessary to theorize contemporary media's increasing incursions into the subperceptual, micropolitical dimensions of life. To the extent that it focuses on how "infinitesimal, diffused and heterogeneous power relations" open up to "independent processes of subjectification," as Maurizio Lazzarato puts it, Foucault's conceptualization of subjective agency manages to span a gap that is most often simply collapsed.[3] Foucault, that is, manages to account for the multiplicity of environmental factors composing any instance of "subjectification" while nonetheless retaining a focus on human subjectivity as a—perhaps even *the*—central focus of his research.

In light of this situation, we can only wonder why such an encounter has not actually come to pass. In one sense, we could say that Foucault's encounter with new media came too early, in the form, for example, of Mark Poster's pioneering 1990 theorization of databases by way of Foucault's analysis of discourse.[4] What then seemed most insistent and exciting—the "linguistic quality of databases"[5] that could be most effectively disclosed through the lens of Foucault's work from the 1970s—now cannot but strike us as a hangover from what is in some sense a bygone print-centric perspective. Alternatively, we could invoke the pseudo-Hegelian *Aufhebung* to which Friedrich Kittler submitted Foucault's archaeology: for Kittler and his fellow German media scientists, Foucault plays the role of stepping-stone, setting into place the infrastructure for discourse networks that themselves demand grounding in concrete media systems.[6] As was the case with Poster's analysis of databases, the Foucault at issue in this media convergence is resolutely the Foucault of the 1970s. We might then ask why we haven't seen a second round of engagement on the part of media theorists with Foucault's later work, particularly given the affinity I begin here by citing.

The simple answer is: Gilles Deleuze. The focus of a few, relatively minor texts (notably "Postscript on Control Societies," "Control and Becoming," and "Having an Idea in Cinema"[7]), Deleuze's substitution of control for discipline has effectively obscured the trajectory that, I suggest, could have led from Foucault's theorization of discipline to a media-theoretical appreciation for his final work on governance and subjectification.[8] At the heart of this deflection of Foucault's thinking is a claim about the fate of the "individual" in a ubiquitously mediated world: as Deleuze famously puts it, control targets not the individual but the "dividual."[9] As

his examples—password access, sampling, continuous training, and so on—make clear, by "dividual," Deleuze means identifying elements that operate at levels beneath individual integration. What Deleuze's concept succinctly grasps—and what it shares with Foucault's late conceptions of governance and subjectification—is how control (or power) targets us not at the level of human individuality, a level that leaves intact our capacity to refuse, but at properly subindividual levels where the resources bound up with individual integration are simply superfluous or, more precisely, always too late to arrive on the scene.

Yet Deleuze's largely anecdotal description of a new sociotechnical logic has exerted an impact far in excess of its modest ambition and has *largely eclipsed attention to the parallel, and arguably more nuanced, developments in Foucault's own trajectory*. By doing so, it has—to be sure, entirely unintentionally—drawn attention away from an "organic" development of Foucault's work that could have helped us (and fortunately still can help us) negotiate the twin necessity for a theory more responsive to the total impact of media and for an account of subjectification that does not simply vacate the category of the individual.

To get a sense of the scope of this systematic oversight, we have only to look at some recent work in media studies, both theoretical and sociological, where a host of scholars have all-too-eagerly embraced Deleuze's synoptic description of an allegedly post-Foucauldian form of control as foundational for a model centered in the operation of networks. Though work in this area is diverse and runs the gamut from more sociological accounts of contemporary surveillance networks to theoretical interrogations of network formations and their technical infrastructures, it seems to manifest a shared investment in the nonhuman (antihuman?) dimensions of networks or, at the very least, in the largely negative impact of control and surveillance on human experience.[10]

A case in point comes by way of what might well be the most sophisticated and also perhaps the most direct repurposing of Deleuze's concepts of control and the dividual for thinking contemporary networks. In *The Exploit*, Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker cite Deleuze as the philosopher par excellence of a postdisciplinary model of control centered in solicitation—or capture—of "network effects," and their project in *The Exploit* involves an updating of Deleuze's insights concerning control for an age of protocol:

> Control in networks operates less through the exception of individuals, groups, or institutions and more through the exceptional quality of networks

> or of their topologies. What matters, then, is less the character of the individual nodes than the topological space within which and through which they operate as nodes. To be a node is not solely a causal affair; it is not to "do" this or to "do" that. To be a node is to exist inseparably from a set of possibilities and parameters—to function within a topology of control.[11]

In this sense, Deleuze's control societies are the platform for the operation of a new form of (concretely media computational) control: protocol. Galloway and Thacker continue:

> What Deleuze calls "societies of control" provide a *medium* through which protocol is able to express itself. In such an instance, it is "information" . . . that constitutes the ability for protocol to materialize networks of all kinds. . . . Information is the key commodity in the organizational logic of protocological control.[12]

What strikes me as extraordinary in Galloway and Thacker's provocative extension/amplification of Deleuze's position is how, despite their recognition of Foucault's lead in thinking the potential of life as resistance and indeed in confronting the general problematic of control,[13] they culminate by reinstituting a form of sovereignty as the nonanthropomorphic agent of control within networks:

> *Perhaps we are witnessing a sovereignty that is unlike the traditional forms of sovereignty, a mode of sovereignty based not on exceptional events but on exceptional topologies*. . . . They exercise sovereignty, and yet there is no one at the helm making each decision. . . . In control societies, bodies are consonant with more distributed modes of individuation that enable their infinite variation (informatic records, databases, consumer profiles, genetic codes, identity shopping, workplace biometrics). Their effects are network effects, and their agency is an anonymous agency.[14]

While it is certainly true that Foucault himself did not address networks directly and also that media played at best a tangential role in his work, this reinstitution of sovereignty by other means seems to run roughshod over the finely motivated shifts in Foucault's understanding of power in the final phase of his research. As I understand it, Foucault's conceptualization of governance marks a further development, *beyond discipline*, away from the exercise of sovereignty understood as any kind of unilateral imposition of power from above.

That is why, even if it is the case that power in late Foucault, as it becomes increasingly dispersed and micrological, also comes to exercise

its sway in an anonymous way (which is to say, *beneath the level of personalization and subjecthood*), it nonetheless remains correlated with the body. This situation is succinctly captured by Lazzarato in his reassessment of late Foucault:

> Power is not a unilateral relation, a totalitarian domination over individuals, such as the one exercised by the *dispositif* of the Panopticon, but a strategic relation. Every force in society exercises power and that power passes through the body, not because power is "omnipotent and omniscient" but because every force is a power of the body. Power comes from below; the forces that constitute it are multiple and heterogeneous. What we call power is an integration, a coordination and determination of the relations between a multiplicity of forces.[15]

For Lazzarato, the consequence of this channeling of power through the body, and thus its effectuation via certain operations of bodily integration, is a renewed focus on the self-activation of subjects.

Unlike the strange alliance of "anonymity" and "identification" invoked by Galloway and Thacker,[16] this renewed focus, which determines the final displacement of Foucault's work, doesn't sit well with any concept of sovereign power, including a network-based, antianthropocentric one; rather, it represents a nuanced form of Foucault's investment in governance, the conceptual equivalent, within his theory, of Deleuze's "modulation." Lazzarato continues: "The displacement that Foucault enacts, sometime in the eighties, consists in considering the 'art of governance' not merely as a strategy of power, even if it is biopolitical power, but as the *action of subjects upon others and upon themselves*. He searched amongst the ancients for the answer to this question: how do *subjects become active*, how are the government of the self and others open to subjectifications that are independent of the biopolitical art of government?"[17]

At the heart of this final quest is a nuanced meditation on individuation that addresses precisely those challenges posed by today's "atmospheric media" without requiring the abandonment of the individual human perspective. As we shall see, Foucault's final thinking on the individual involves a theorization of the larger process of individuation from which individuals emerge, and on this score his work parallels Deleuze's and even more significantly Gilbert Simondon's. Yet in contrast certainly to Deleuze and arguably to Simondon as well, Foucault places his emphasis squarely on grasping how the broader context of individuation impacts the experience of the individuals who, on his account, are the requisite correlates of any process of individuation. In this respect, Foucault's engagement with the

governance of populations addresses the challenges posed by twenty-first-century media following a distinctly different trajectory than the Deleuze-inspired work of critics like Galloway and Thacker. In particular, Foucault is concerned with exploring how the maintenance of subindividual aggregates over time supports a reconceptualization of the category of the individual. Far more than the theorization of the "dividual," it is this reconceptualization that makes the posthumous encounter between Foucault and new media so exciting.

Individuation

In *Pour un humanisme technologique* (*For a Technological Humanism*), philosopher Xavier Guchet draws a stark contrast between the approach of Simondon and that of Foucault. Simondon, Guchet contends, found himself compelled "to formulate the problem of the human sciences otherwise than in terms of normality and regularity . . . : for Simondon, the problem of the human sciences is not the normal human, it is the possibility of inventing the new in the human order (this is what Simondon calls an individuation); it is not regularity, it is the creative impetus."[18] Rather than simply acceding to the implications of this judgment, let us treat Guchet's claim, and the opportunity of thinking Foucault alongside Simondon, as a productive challenge: namely, what might Simondon's profoundly original rethinking of individuation as an open, multiscalar, and essentially incomplete process add to Foucault's meditations on normativity, discipline, biopower, and governance?[19]

Let me immediately answer this question. What Simondon's robust conception of individuation provides is a mechanism for Foucault's category of "refusal" to become creative. As we shall see, Foucault makes a distinction between resistance and refusal, and he calls for the refusal, for example, of categories of individuality handed down by the state. But the problem is that he can't explain how this refusal can turn into anything new, can create different, yet-to-be-invented categories. What I shall suggest is that Simondon's conception of individuation—precisely because of its constitutive incompleteness and ongoing relationship with the "pre-individual" environment—introduces a mechanism that can account for this creativity. Furthermore, this thinking of individuation is more compatible with Foucault's late work on biopolitics—and specifically his conceptualization of the life of the population—than disciplinary or normative conceptions of individualization and is, in some senses, anticipated by Fou-

cault's own late opening to the biological via his engagement with Georges Canguilhem's conception of error. To the extent that Foucault's conceptualization of governance as the governance of biological populations involves a rearticulation of the correlation of power and the body, the ultimate payoff of this line of argumentation is to underscore the expanded conceptualization of the body at issue in Foucault's final work: it is precisely on account of its continuous and multiscale contact with the environment as a whole that the body comes to be activated, and it is only once the body is embedded in a greater flux of forces, a larger individuation, that this expanded field of bodily life becomes accessible.

In his major work, *L'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information*,[20] Simondon develops a complex theory of individuation that spans the continuum from the physical to the collective domain and takes as its first principle the essential incompleteness of the process of individuation. Individuation is an ongoing process that always occurs in conjunction with a "preindividual" domain, which Simondon defines as a "charge of nature attached to the individual."[21]

We can get a sense for the singularity of Simondon's conception of individuation by way of contrast with the branch of biological thinking known as autopoietic theory. The essential incompleteness of individuation serves to differentiate the preindividual from the autopoietic concept of environment to which it otherwise bears some resemblance. Thus, whereas Francisco Varela (with Humberto Maturana, the inventor of autopoiesis) connects emergence to the cofunctioning of local and global perspectives *of a single system*, Simondon links emergence to a more encompassing recontextualization of individuation; emergence, for Simondon, involves the passage to a higher level of individuation, one that encompasses the system *and* the preindividual environment. On this account, what is experienced as an acute or irresolvable conflict at one level of individuation can be and indeed is resolved via passage to another, higher level.

For Simondon, then, it is not simply the global perspective *of the organism*—the perspective tied to the organism's specification of a world—that informs the bootstrapping of identity from level to level. Rather, the upward spiral of individuation is driven by two important conditions: the nonidentification of individuation with any form of individual (physical, biological, psychic, or collective) and the coupling of individuation with the entire environment (nature or the pre-Socratic *apeiron*) as a source of "preindividual" potential. Together, these conditions ensure that individuation involves a recursivity that is not driven solely or even primarily by

the organism's self-referential demands (whether these be autopoietic or heteropoietic) but that instead draws from the global *situation*—the preindividual as potential—within which individuation at all levels occurs.

We cannot overemphasize this distinction: Simondon's global situation differs from the autopoietic global perspective *because it is not relative to the organism (that is, the organism plus its world) in isolation from the environment*. Put otherwise, the global situation is not a perspective *of* the organism but a perspective *on the individuation of* the organism, that is, a perspective that situates the organism within the context of the preindividual.[22] Central to this differentiation is Simondon's insistence on the primacy of relationality over individuals related (or the equiprimacy of relation and individuation):

> Individuation and relation are inseparable; the capacity for relation is a part of being, and enters in its definition and in the determination of its limits: there is no limit between the individual and its activity of relation. Relation is the contemporary of being; it forms a part of being both energetically and spatially. Relation exists simultaneously with being in the form of the field, and the potential that it delimits [*définit*] is real, not formal. Being in a potential form does not mean that energy does not exist.[23]

What this passage describes is the double relationality of individuation. Because it implicates both individual and preindividual, individuation is relation in two distinct senses: as the relation of the individual and its "associated milieu" (more or less synonymous with Varela's "world"), individuation occurs within a single level or "order of magnitude" and is, as such, entirely actual; as the relation of the individual and the preindividual, by contrast, individuation occurs across orders of magnitude and thus concerns the potential prior to or "beneath" its actualization. Not only does Simondon's conceptualization of the equiprimacy of individuation and relation thus situate "coupling" within a more encompassing ontogenesis, but it accords the preindividual—that is, the environment not already coupled to the individual system—a mode of *potential* efficacy rooted in what he calls "metastability."[24] The primacy Simondon accords relation thus serves to differentiate his conception of agency from Varela's and all other accounts that focus solely on the domain of actuality. Whereas "embodied enaction" remains centered on the organism in an actualized coupling with a part of the environment (its world or surplus of significance), agency for Simondon encompasses the environment as a whole and as a source of potential that may *or may not* be actualized and, indeed, that need not be actual-

ized *by the organism* in order to impact its individuation. This distinction will become important later, once we have traversed Foucault's thinking on refusal and correlated it with his invocation of error in biology and his conceptualization of the life of the population. As the mechanism for what Simondon calls "disindividuation," some degree of which is requisite for any new or creative individuation and necessarily involves a shift of balance from the actual to the potential, environmental agency may well explain how refusal can yield new, creative forms of individuality.

From Resistance to Refusal

In a brief text from 1982, "The Subject and Power," in which he meditates on the philosophical problem of the present time, Foucault finds himself compelled to displace his longstanding engagement with the thematic of resistance, together with the juridico-normative model of power it invokes, in favor of a potentially more radical operation of refusal:

> Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are *but to refuse what we are*. We have to imagine and build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political "double bind," which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures. . . . The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate us both from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us from the state and *the type of individualization linked to the state*. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through *the refusal of this kind of individuality* that has been imposed on us for several centuries.[25]

Whereas resistance, as Foucault had long thought it, occurs against the state but from within the state and within the categories for identity it sanctions, refusal marks a resistance against these very categories, which in some sense originates—indeed, must originate—from a site *outside* the state's jurisdiction. The displacement at issue here makes common cause with Foucault's effort, in his final work, to embed the body in something other than the symbolic law (or what he calls the "moral code")—which is to say, to treat it as more than an effect of the institution of juridical law (and, "beneath" it, power). What characterizes refusal, as a more radical, because exterior, form of resistance, is the assumption that there exists something in virtue of which the very symbolic injunction—the injunction that *grants* subjectivity in the very moment it sub-jects (in this case, the injunction to individualize)—can *itself* be refused.

This something in virtue of which the symbolic injunction can be refused is the body. But it is the body not simply in its projective aspect (the body ego or imaginary "mirror-stage" identification) or even in its phenomenological or biological aspect (the lived body), but as it is coupled, both actually and virtually, with the environment. Because of the difficulty of maintaining the boundaries or even conceptualizing the divisions as boundaries, we might rather refer to this "something" here as life; indeed, as we shall see, it correlates with what Foucault goes on to theorize, in the final work on biopolitics, as the "life of the population."[26]

With his distinction, in the introduction to *The Use of Pleasure*, between "morality of code" and "morality of behavior" (or morality and ethics, respectively), Foucault would seem to open the possibility of moving resistance outside the symbolic.[27] Rather than a mere effect of power (what it had been up until his recentering), Foucault now correlates a more radical form of resistance, one rooted in refusal, with the freedom to carry out symbolic injunctions in different ways. While his thinking requires that symbolic codes possess a certain flexibility, what is responsible for the choice of a particular moral conduct is inextricably bound up with the individual's own self-relation, that is, with something inseparable from concrete embodied practice or, in a word, with life itself. Such an understanding of ethical self-formation requires a domain of bodily life—a bodily *excess* and not a mere *remainder*, as Judith Butler would have it, that precedes and conditions subjectivation. Indeed, precisely such a domain seems to be necessary if we are to "refuse" the *type* of individualization the state imposes on us, following the above analysis. To be more than a fleeting rejection of individualizing categories, resistance must be able to take shape as a voluntary and cumulative "pattern of conduct." Rather than a residue of the symbolic injunctions of state power, successful resistance can come only from the outside—from the forces of the outside as these operate on and through singular bodies, coupled both actually and virtually to the environment.

This analysis calls on us to differentiate Foucault's understanding of "productive power" from Butler's interpretation.[28] In Foucault, I want to suggest, productive power does not just double juridical power, constituting what in Butler's work forms a *purely abstract* source of resistance (and of subjectivity founded on resistance). Indeed, in Foucault's late work, productive power becomes attached to the positive agency of the ethical subject (the body coupled actually *and* virtually to the environment) such that it comes to describe a *range* or *field* of potential behavior (of "manners

of behavior") that operates *within* the dictates of moral codes (symbolic injunctions). Such a field of behavior can be said to occupy the space of activity or agency that is constituted by juridical law, but it can neither be derived from that law (as a source of resistance internal to it) nor limited to its potential impact on that law (as resistance that can—somehow—alter the law).

As a form of positive agency exercised *within* such a field, productive power allows for the development of new forms of self-identification and of community that are rooted directly in and emerge from environmentally implicated bodily behavior. These forms of self and communal identification are no longer simply effects of a form of productive power that is purely abstract, formal, and monolithic, but rather ongoing and cumulative processes involving the active productive agency of the body, again as coupled both actually *and* virtually to the environment. Because it gives rise to a whole field of potential identifications, this exercise of productive power allows for variant results (what Foucault refers to as "stylization") that permit and preserve bodily singularity. And most important, this "free" exercise of productive power, because it is ongoing and cumulative, can generate forms of sustained individual resistance and ultimately group identifications that possess the "power" not only to *refuse* the categories of individualization offered by the state but also to *institute* new individualizations and behaviors (and thus new forms of subjectivity) in their place.[29]

The Productive Body

At the end of the first chapter of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault interrupts the flow of his argumentation in order to insert a personal narrative that traces the motivation for his study of the prison to certain events in the present:

> That punishment in general and the prison in particular *belong to a political technology of the body* is a lesson that I have learnt not so much from history as from the present. In recent years, prison revolts have occurred throughout the world. . . . They were *revolts, at the level of the body, against the very body of the prison*. . . . I would like to write the history of this prison, with all the political investments of the body that it gathers together in its closed architecture. Why? Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means by that writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing the history of the present.[30]

What strikes me here are the terms of Foucault's characterization of the recent worldwide prison revolts as "*revolts, at the level of the body, against the very body of the prison*." As forceful and insistent as it is, this characterization furnishes something that seems more or less missing—something present only in its more or less complete absence—in the study Foucault goes on to write: namely, the explicitly articulated concept of a positive modality of bodily agency capable of opposing or of *refusing* the seemingly inescapable disciplinary normalization or (re)materialization of the body.

I want to take Foucault's claim here seriously. What would it mean to read *Discipline and Punish* as a study devoted not only, or even principally, to establishing the success of disciplinary mechanisms in normalizing the body, but more fundamentally to outlining a model of bodily activity, agency, or power that lies behind or beneath the disciplinary techniques Foucault studies, which forms the "energy" for their efficacy and holds the potential, in principle, to refuse these very techniques?

Reading Foucault in this way—which amounts, in this specific case, to reading *Discipline and Punish* from the standpoint of his final work—is in fact necessary if we are to respect his desire to write the history of the present. By reading retrospectively, we are able to bring out what remains latent in Foucault's thought of the time, what has become more insistent with the shift in his own perspective from power/knowledge to subjectification and governance. In short, we are able to see how Foucault is already struggling to formulate an understanding of bodily agency that not only breaks with the "semio-technique" of punishment and forms the underside, the proximate occasion, of what Foucault calls the "historical moment of discipline," but that also underscores the wholly positive or productive modality of its exercise.

While such a reading leads us to revise our understanding of Foucault's conception of normativity, more proximately it requires us to oppose the thesis that *Discipline and Punish* develops a notion of the body as the simple correlate of a symbolic injunction that is presumed to be wholly successful. It would involve no exaggeration to claim that this position holds a hegemonic status more or less equivalent to the role of prohibition in relation to the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*:[31] despite a dazzling variety of interests and theoretical agendas, commentators of *Discipline and Punish* seem to agree in assuming that discipline can and must be characterized by its frightening efficacy. Whatever their differences, these interpretations converge on seeing the body as a function, and solely a function, of discipline.

By way of contrast to this agenda, let us consider Foucault's own formulation of his genealogical task and the important differentiation of three overlapping, though historically differentiated, "technologies of power" from which it emerges:

> We have, then, the sovereign and his force, the social body, and the administrative apparatus; mark, sign, trace; ceremony, representation, exercise; the vanquished enemy, the juridical subject in the process of requalification, the individual subjected to immediate coercion; the tortured body, the soul with its manipulated representations, the body subjected to training. We have here the three series of elements that characterize the three mechanisms that face one another in the second half of the eighteenth century. . . . They are modalities according to which the power to punish is exercised: three technologies of power. *The problem, then is the following: how is it that, in the end, it was the third that was adopted?* (131, emphasis added)

By taking seriously this question, in conjunction with Foucault's "personal narrative" of contemporaneous prison revolts, we can specify the function of discipline along lines radically different than those taken by critics, like Butler, who link discipline with symbolic power.[32] Such a consideration allows us to show that discipline involves a corporeal and physical training of the body that *lies beneath and conditions* the forms of juridical power that both regulate it and grant it abstract rights. And it also allows us to appreciate just how fundamentally ambivalent Foucault's understanding of productive power is, insofar as it characterizes, on the one hand, the receptivity of the body to the demands of disciplinary power and, on the other, the activity of the body that holds the potential to exceed its disciplinary normalization and explains the necessity for discipline in the first place.

What all this seems to foreground is the claim that Foucault's work, at least from *Discipline and Punish* on, concerns the body in multiple registers and from variant perspectives. And if this means that we can accord a certain specificity to Foucault's analysis in *Discipline and Punish*—as, say, Foucault's exploration of the coercive force of power on, and indeed *in*, the body—it also implies the presence in this text, no matter how occulted, of a positive, productive account of bodily agency. If I am right, the function of discipline is not to produce the body, as it were, ex nihilo, but rather to contain the always latent threat of bodily excess *by enlisting the force of the body for its own end*. Like any other technique that acts on and through the body, discipline always and necessarily involves the body in two valences at the same time: as that which is (re)materialized according to its specific

protocol and as that which, at least *in potentia*, holds the power to resist and perhaps, even, to refuse. Where there is discipline, we might say, there is, perforce, also bodily excess, the productive force of the body as material agent, coupled actually and virtually to the environment.

This double-sidedness of the operation of discipline explains both the limitations of Foucault's conceptualization of categories of individuality—the very categories he finds himself compelled ultimately to refuse—and the potential for new forms of individualization to arise out of such refusal. Thus it comes as no surprise whatsoever that the four disciplinary mechanisms that "distribute individuals in space" actually accord discipline the capacity to create individuality: "To sum up, it might be said that discipline creates out of the bodies it controls four types of individuality, or rather an individuality that is endowed with four characteristics: it is cellular (by the play of spatial distribution), it is organic (by the coding of activities), it is genetic (by the accumulation of time), it is combinatory (by the composition of forces)" (167). Indeed, the creation of individuality might be said to constitute *the* fundamental goal of discipline: "Discipline 'makes' individuals; . . . it 'trains' the moving, confused, useless multitudes of bodies and forces into a multiplicity of individual elements—small, separate cells, organic autonomies, genetic identities and continuities, combinatory segments" (170).

That the "fabrication of cellular, organic, genetic and combinatory individuality" involves the *reduction* of the body as a "political force"—and, also, as a bio-phenomenological force—can be seen quite clearly in the function of normalization (192, cf. 221). By introducing a "constraint of conformity that must be achieved," normalizing discipline does not simply punish nonobservance, but imposes an "obligation" to conform (183, 180). Moreover, through the technique of the examination, discipline entirely transforms the individuality of the individual, stripping it of any ties to the individual as a body and rematerializing the individual as the correlate of the particular combination of individual traits that make of her a "case." Normalization through examination thus marks the "appearance of a new modality of power in which each individual receives as his status his own individuality" (192). In this new modality of power, "individual difference is irrelevant": far from constituting positive traits of distinct individuals, the four modalities of individuation serve to constitute each individual, differentially, as a permutation of discipline itself.

For this reason, discipline marks a fundamental shift in the "object" of power: from the "juridical subject" to the "disciplinary individual." Fou-

cault describes the *historical process* of this shift as a "reversal of the political axis of individualization" (192). Whereas in feudal regimes and in representational political formations more generally, individualization is "ascending," in the sense that the possession of power or rights goes hand in hand with individualization; in disciplinary regimes, it is "descending": "as power becomes more anonymous and more functional, those on whom it is exercised tend to be more strongly individualized" (193).

This historical shift also forms the basis for a more important, *properly philosophical*, hierarchical distinction for which Foucault is, justly, famous:

> The general juridical form that guaranteed a system of rights that were egalitarian in principle was supported by these tiny, everyday, physical mechanisms, by all those systems of micro-power that are essentially non-egalitarian and asymmetrical that we call the disciplines. And although, in a formal way, the representative regime makes it possible, directly or indirectly, with or without relays, for the will of all to form the fundamental authority of sovereignty, the disciplines provide, at the base, *a guarantee of the submission of forces and bodies. The real, corporal disciplines constituted the foundation of the formal, juridical liberties.* (222, emphasis added)

With this derivation of juridical power from discipline, we come back to the question Foucault posed at the beginning of his investigation: namely, why the "political anatomy" of discipline was the modality of power that was, in fact, adopted. We can now see that this is less a question demanding an answer than an orienting problematic, for it is not so much that discipline wins out over representation, but rather that it operates—and has always operated—beneath and as the condition of possibility for juridical guarantees. Consequently, we have to qualify Foucault's own emphasis on the "historical moment of discipline" at least enough to allow that discipline was, in a certain sense, always already there, always already in operation, as it were, behind the scene.

As for the other, productive side of individuation, must we not admit that it is always still somehow there, subterraneously in operation, despite the constraints imposed by categories of individualization? Isn't this indeed what Foucault himself gestures toward when he broaches the topic of the productive power in *Discipline and Punish*, specifically on the basis of its contrast with the juridical subject? He writes: "The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an 'ideological' representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline.' We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of

power in negative terms. . . . In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production" (194). Isn't our task today that of expanding Foucault's crucial insight into the positive side of discipline, of thinking carrying forward his appreciation for the productivity of individuations that cut against social categories of individualization designed to contain them?

From Disciplinary Normalization to the Immanent Normality of the Living

In a stunning engagement with Foucault's evolving thought concerning normativity, Pierre Macherey correlates the late turn to an immanent norm with the productivity of the productive body outside the symbolic grid of disciplinary society and biopower. For Macherey, understanding Foucault's development requires us to pose a "fundamental question": "how can one move from a negative conception of the norm and the way it acts, founded on a model of juridical exclusion and related to that which is permitted and forbidden, to a positive conception, which on the contrary insists on its biological function of inclusion and regulation, in the sense not of a systematic regulation but of a regularization, with reference to the distinction, confirmed by the so-called human sciences, between the normal and the pathological"?[33] Otherwise and more succinctly put: how can one move from a *juridical* notion of the norm as both external and pregiven to a *biological* conception of an internal and processual norm?[34]

In the course of answering this question, Macherey traces the productive conception of power that characterizes Foucault's final work to the productivity of the norm and the thesis of its immanence. What is central to this interpretation is the way the norm produces itself in the very process through which it produces actions outside itself: "If the norm is not exterior to its field of application, this is not only because . . . it produces it but *because it produces itself in it as it produces it*. . . . It is in this sense that it is necessary to talk about the immanence of the norm, in relation to what it produces and the process by which it produces it: that which 'norms' the norm is its action."[35]

That the operation of such an immanent normativity resonates strongly with the work of Foucault's mentor, Canguilhem, finds apt expression in the prècis Foucault writes of Canguilhem's *The Normal and the Pathological*:[36]

> Canguilhem, through the elucidation of knowledge concerning life and the concepts which articulate this knowledge, wants to rediscover which of them belongs to the *concept of life*. . . . *Forming concepts is one way of living, not of killing life*; it is one way of living in complete mobility and not immobilizing life; it is showing, among these millions of living beings who inform their environment and are informed from it outwards, an innovation which will be judged trifling or insubstantial as you will: a very particular type of information.[37]

Not only does this resonance with Canguilhem establish the immanence of norms of knowledge—their derivation from a "process which engenders, as it unfurls, the conditions by which it is authenticated and by which it becomes effective"[38]—but it also correlates immanent normativity with a conception of virtuality rooted in the living.

For this reason, Macherey is able to claim that the principle of the immanence of the norm "leads to . . . all its effects" and also, thereby, to link immanence persuasively with Foucault's understanding of productive power:

> Contrary to the common notion according to which the power of norms is artificial and arbitrary, this principle reveals the necessary and natural character of this power which is formed by its own action, which produces itself as it produces its effects, tendentially without reservation or limitation. . . . This is probably what Foucault wished to express when he talked of the positive nature of the norm which is entirely manifest in its action—that is to say, in its phenomena, or again in its affirmations [*énoncés*], without being in any way held back within these, or in any way overhanging them, an absolute of power from which its effectiveness would be drawn, but the full resources of which it would never exhaust.[39]

Insofar as it reconciles the productivity of ethical freedom with the demands of moral normativity, this excess potentiality—or metastability—of the living might be said to hold the key to Foucault's final work. Indeed, the self-constituting character of ethical normativity furnishes something like the basis for the range of "manners of behavior" that, as I suggested above, informs Foucault's injunction to refuse the forms of individuality provided to us, already preformed, by the state.

What this means, in the end, is that productive power and the "naturalistic" ethics rooted in it cannot be separated from the *agency of the living organism* or, perhaps more accurately, from the living body in its com-

plex, systemic, actual *and* virtual correlation with the environment in its entirety. While the consequences ensuing from this conclusion are manifold, perhaps none is more fundamental than the certain "excess" it grants life over the subject. In a 1981 lecture, "Les mailles du pouvoir" ("The Chains of Power"), Foucault not only underscores this excess but situates it in relation to the waning of juridical power in the eighteenth century. "Life and the body" become objects of power in the eighteenth century: "Before, there were only subjects, juridical subjects from which one could take away goods [*les biens*], and also life itself. Now there are bodies and populations. Power becomes materialist. It ceases being essentially juridical."[40] This statement, summarizing as it does an entire development in Foucault's thinking after *The History of Sexuality*, volume 1, points toward the problematic of his final work, which might be reformulated as follows: how can the excess constitutive of life (or the living body, coupled actually and virtually with the environment, or alternatively, the life of the population) be reconfigured, reconciled with the category of the subject?

As Foucault's homage to Canguilhem would seem to suggest, the answer to this question, or rather the solution to this problematic, must be found in the fundamental capacity for "error" that characterizes the living. Meditating on Canguilhem's decisive importance for "all those who . . . have tried to rethink the question of the subject," Foucault pits Canguilhem against phenomenology and thus locates in his example the possibility for a conception of subjectivity as the *effect* of the "errors" of life, rather than the constituting basis for knowledge: "Phenomenology could indeed introduce the body, sexuality, death, the perceived world into the field of analysis; the Cogito remained central; neither the rationality of science nor the specificity of the life sciences could compromise its founding role. It is to this philosophy of meaning, subject and the experienced thing that Canguilhem has opposed a philosophy of error, concept and the living being."[41] What characterizes a "subject" derived from Canguilhem's philosophy is not only its provisionality but its emergence out of a more inclusive experience of the living: the experience of error that, for Canguilhem (as for Foucault), is fundamental for the production of the new:

> At the heart of these problems is that of error. For at life's most basic level, the play of code and decoding leaves room for chance, which, before being disease, deficit or monstrosity, is something like perturbation in the information system, something like a "mistake." In the extreme, life is what is capable of error. And it is perhaps this given or rather this fundamental even-

> tuality which must be called to account concerning the fact that the question of anomaly crosses all of biology, through and through. We must also call it to account for mutations and the evolutionary processes they induce. We must also call it to account for this singular, this 'hereditary error' which makes life result, with man, in a living being who is never completely at home, a living being dedicated to 'error' and destined, in the end, to 'error.' And if we admit that the concept is the answer that life itself gives to this chance, it must be that error is at the root of what makes human thought and its history.[42]

With this account of error as what lies beyond the actuality of the individuated living being, as a source of chance that impacts life from the outside, we return to the encounter I anticipated at the beginning of this essay: namely, the productive challenge Simondon's conceptualization of individuation poses to Foucault's shifting embrace of normativity. We must now ask, isn't error an effect of the organism's sensitivity to the impact—even, the *agency*—of the environmental outside, what Simondon calls the "preindividual," that is *virtual* in relation to the functioning organism, the constituted individual? And if the answer is yes, then doesn't Foucault's engagement with Canguilhem, and more generally with a biological conception of normativity and of life as a productivity that exceeds the constraining mechanisms of discipline and of biopower, open an entirely different terrain of individuation? Finally, isn't it on this terrain of individuation—an ongoing and constitutively incomplete process of errancy at the very heart of which operates disindividuation or refusal in the name of the environmental outside—that the hope of thinking a biopolitics distinct from, and indeed in excess over, biopower might begin to take root?

From Populations (back) to Individuals

Foucault's investment in the category of the *population*—an investment that surfaces most markedly in his later lecture courses on biopolitics—takes off directly from this reckoning with the category of error that, he claims, is constitutive both for life and for history. Just as genetic error marks the excess that gives rise to individual life, so too does genetic variability characterize the surplus that informs the life of a population. In both cases, what is at issue is an effort to think life through the relation of the individual with a force that is both external and excessive in relation to it. Thus, whereas error figures as the unthought—and *unthinkable*—basis that gives rise to the living individual, species variability, while probabilistically

calculable at the scale of the population, also appears aleatory and unpredictable to the isolated individual.

Yet far from following a trajectory that would simply leave the individual behind, as the Deleuzean motif of the "dividual" does, Foucault seeks to rethink the individual in the most fundamental way: by linking it indissolubly with the figure of the collective and thereby rendering it radically relational. The individual is thus repositioned as a process rather than a substance: an ongoing "process of individualization," a flux of individual elements and behaviors, whose unity comes less through any power of its own than through a simple duration of effects. Addressing the question posed by the "naturality of the population"—its status as a "set of processes that one must manage in what they have of the natural and starting from what they have of the natural"—Foucault characterizes the population as a "kind of technico-political object of management and government."[43] Crucial for my purposes here, and for Foucault's account, is the ultimate nondifferentiation between the population and the individualizations of which it forms the aggregate; indeed, the population might well be understood as a technique for control in the sense that it gives coherence—through the generation of probabilistic regularities—to what at the individual level remains radically anomalous.

Foucault is clear concerning this correlation of the population and the individual, even if he doesn't always clarify the specific lineages of mediation operating between them. The population, he states,

> is not the simple sum of individuals inhabiting a territory. In fact, the population is not an initial given [*donnée première*]; it is under the dependence of a whole series of variables. The population will vary with the climate. It will vary with the material surroundings. It will vary with the intensity of commerce and activity in the circulation of wealth. . . . The population will vary with the moral or religious values that are associated with this or that type of conduct: for example, with the ethico-religious valorization of the celibacy of priests or monks. It will vary also and especially with, to be sure, the situation of subsistence.[44]

In the various facets of the population's essential dependence, what is at stake is a situation in which this or that aspect of the environment impacts individuals, or rather individualized elements of behavior, but where this impact comes to make sense, to possess coherence, *only when it is conceptualized at the level of the population*. Thus, while the population is not a simple aggregate of individuals, as Foucault reminds us explicitly, it is most defi-

nitely a continuously changing aggregation of individualized elements and behaviors.

In this respect, we can understand how the population furnishes a locus and a *technique* for governing as well as a form of mediation through which humans can experience their own constitutive yet otherwise ineffable individualizations. I would even be tempted to read Foucault's *population* as a concretization of Simondon's *individuation*: what it specifies, as shown by Foucault's comments on the emergence of political economy, are the multiple and concrete ways in which individuals emerge as effects of resonances between humans and the environment.[45] In this sense, no matter how totalizing the governance of populations may appear to be, it remains the case that what informs the flux of populations, what composes their energy or "desire," is the open set of individualizations that emerge as their concrete and provisional effects. Here, we can appreciate the nature of Foucault's ongoing commitment to the category of the individual: far from losing its relevance in the shift to the population as the locus of power, the level of the individual—again meaning the flux of individual elements and behaviors—is precisely the site for the individualization of variables that, in aggregate, form the concrete content of the population at any given moment.

Let us pause here to contrast Foucault's understanding with Deleuze's. While both thinkers interrogate the concept of the individual in order to reject any account of it as a substance, they do starkly different things with the resulting relationality. As noted, Deleuze's introduction of the "dividual" institutes a principle for the organization of life that simply displaces the individual. Updated in the neo-Deleuzean project of Galloway and Thacker, this displacement yields a conceptualization of individuation that "has little to do with individual human subjects" and that leaves behind its "classical definition, in which individuation is always concerned with the production of individuals." In control societies, by contrast,

> individuation is always concerned with the tension between the individuation of networks and the individuation of the component parts of networks. *Individuation in the control society is less about the production of the one from the many, and more about the production of the many through the one. In the classical model, it is the hive that individuates the drone. Here, however, every drone always already facilitates the existence of multiple coexisting hives. It is a question not of being individuated as a "subject" but instead of being individuated as a node integrated into one or more networks.*[46]

What explains the wholesale displacement of the individual on this neo-Deleuzean line of thinking is the exteriority of this operation of individuation to life or, more specifically, to a form of life that would include human life. The individuation invoked here is that of the human *purely in the service of another individuation*, the individuation of the network.

This conclusion exposes the tension at the heart of Galloway and Thacker's project to think individuation as life-resistance. Foucault's concept of life-resistance, even when read through Deleuze's mediation, simply cannot be reconciled with a rethinking of individuation that *voids it of its fundamental reference to* life. This conceptual breach cannot be overcome through the simple assertion of a homology between technical and living networks. Indeed, Galloway and Thacker's claim that "networks are not just technical systems but also real-time, dynamic, experiential living networks"[47] is belied by their nearly exclusive focus on the component individuations that make up the parts of networks at the expense of their broader operation. If the point of their neo-Deleuzean reformulation of individuation is to distance individuation from the experience of any individual and thus (barring a reformulation of experience) from experience as such, their mobilization of "life resistance" would appear to involve a significant tension. Indeed their recourse to a politics rooted in the "tactics of nonexistence," in which the nodes that facilitate individuation within networks are somehow refused, seems to romanticize what amounts to a form of bare life that, paradoxically, can resist only by refusing to individuate.

With his stress on the *naturality* of the population, by contrast, Foucault inscribes a certain continuity between the species-being of the human and the concretizations of variation (or error) that can happen only at the level of individualization. At the same time, the biological individuation of the human that can be measured and governed through the biotechniques of population management is doubled by a social individuation that forms the object of marketing and the management of public opinion. In both cases—which represent the two extremes of a continuum—Foucault is clear that the population opens the terrain within which the mechanisms of power can be exercised:

> The population is thus, on one hand, the human species, and on the other, it is what one calls the public. . . . The public, a major notion of the 18th century, is the population taken from the standpoint of its opinions, of its manners of doing, of its behaviors, of its habits, of its fears, of its prejudices, of its needs . . . . The population is thus all that will stretch from the biological grounding by species up to the surface of capture offered by the public. From

> the species to the public, one has there an entire field of new realities, realities that are new in the sense that they are, for the mechanisms of power, the pertinent elements, the pertinent space on the interior of which and in virtue of which one must act.[48]

The key point here is that the population comprises an individuation of the human that is anchored at the level of individualized elements and behaviors but that allows only indirect interaction with these elements and behaviors. Whether it be to institutions of control or to human individuals themselves, the subindividual yet individualized components of life become available for action only when they are, as it were, mediated through the figure of the population and the techniques that have been developed for analyzing, managing, and manipulating it.

It is for this very reason that Foucault's work can provide a resource to the contemporary media theorist seeking to grapple with the atmospheric or environmental dimensions of twenty-first-century media: specifically, the figure of the population gives a means for assessing the impact of environmental factors as it will have always already been in operation at the very heart of the individualized elements and behaviors that make up life.

To make good on this claim, I will need to bring my account of population as individuation to completion. What is most crucial about population as a new ground for individuation, and a new technique for governance, is its diffuseness. Indeed, it is precisely because of its *nonpertinence* to the figure of the constituted individual that the governance of the population diverges from any kind of sovereign power. As an aggregation of individualized elements and behaviors and not of constituted individuals, the population evades the very category on which sovereign power is able to exercise its sway; indeed, because of its sensitivity to a complex series of environmental variables, the population remains opaque to capture by any sovereign act. The crucial consequence of this shift is a rethinking of the operation of resistance: far from being a primitive given on which sovereign power might act, the population is

> a given that depends on a whole series of variables which thus insures that it cannot be transparent to the action of the sovereign. . . . In fact, the variables on which the population depends allow it, to a very considerable degree, to escape from the voluntarist and direct action of the sovereign in the form of the law. . . . The limit of the law, insofar as one considers the relation sovereign-subject, is the disobedience of the subject; it is the "no" that the subject opposes to the sovereign. But when it is a question of the relation of

> the government to the population, the limit of what is decided by the sovereign or by the government is not at all necessarily the refusal of the people to which it addresses itself.[49]

Recalling our discussion of the passage from resistance to refusal, we can appreciate the need for a further step away from sovereign power and the ways in which it seeks to control us by addressing us as individuals. In the context of Foucault's conception of the governance of populations, the refusal of categories of individuality can at best be preparatory for a form of life resistance that is rooted in the sheer complexity of the variables impacting the continuity of populations. Such a form of life resistance can be distinguished from the form of resistance—resistance to the sovereign decision—with which Foucault was concerned in "The Subject and Power": specifically, whereas the earlier form of resistance was animated by a residue endemic to symbolic injunctions of state power, life resistance is structurally coupled not to a certain formation of power (biopower), but to a field of operation in which life forces are both produced and controlled (biopolitics), and, whereas resistance as refusal could occur only in virtue of a bodily excess over the categories of individuality handed down to us by our tradition, life resistance moves beneath the level of the individual body in order to operate in virtue of subindividual elements and behaviors that are less products of the body than bodily effects of the environmental modulation within which they occur.

The peculiar situation that results from such a reconceptualization of resistance as life resistance—individualized elements and behaviors that can be unified only by dint of their duration within a given population—is perfectly captured by Tiziana Terranova in her discussion of Foucault's concept of the population: "A population," she clarifies,

> is not a collection of subjects of right—as constituted by the partial alienation of the natural rights to the sovereign—but a dynamic quasi-subject constituted by a great number of variables (natural and artificial, in as much as a population is one with the environmental milieus that constitute and affect it). A population is neither a subject nor an organism, thus it does not even have an immune system since it is not functionally differentiated and has no clear borders. It is, by definition, normalized but heterogeneous, internally fragmented and in a continuous state of drift.[50]

As they comprise highly differentiated yet ultimately smooth fields, populations are breeding grounds for individualizations that are less the prod-

ucts of individuals than the effects of a certain nondifferentiation of individuals from their environments, a fundamental imbrication of individuals within the larger populations/environments/individuations from which they emerge but from which they are never entirely separated. Terranova hits the nail on the head when she claims that populations are one with the environmental milieus that compose their variability, but her claim needs to be extended to the actual contents of populations, namely, sets of individualizations that become coherent—and accessible—only through aggregation.

Following up on Foucault's own suggestions in *Security, Territory, Population*,[51] Terranova's reading proposes a fundamental shift in how we conceptualize the relation between the individual and the collective. What in particular she helps us see is how Foucault's conceptualization of the population requires a routing of individual experience through the collective: because individualizations, despite themselves forming the actual contents of population aggregations, remain illegible in isolation, they must be *mediated by* the life of the population:

> The life of a population involves the consideration of collective phenomena, which, taken at the level of the individual, are aleatory and unpredictable, but which reveal probabilistic regularities once considered at the mass level. In fact, it can be said that biopolitics turns to those aleatory events that are produced within a given population considered in its duration. Indeed, the element of the population is intimately tied to the problem of the series . . . that is, to open series which can only be controlled on the basis of a probabilistic calculus, unfolding in a space which is not so much a space as an environment supporting the circulation and mutual interaction of causes and effects.[52]

It is precisely here—in relation to the probabilistic calculus opened by populations—that I would situate the potential of Foucault's work as a resource for the media theorist. The core of this potential centers on the homology between governance's probabilistic control over individual experience and twenty-first-century media's direct or subconscious impact on preindividual sensory life. In both cases, the "phenomena" at issue for individual experience cannot appear to consciousness, or more precisely and more generally, they do not have any coherence at the level of individual self-reference; in both cases, that is, the phenomena at issue must be mediated through a larger process of individuation that both constitutes experience in the form of an effect and gives access to it.

In this respect, media theory brings a distinctly affirmative deployment to the Foucauldian account of the life of the population: just as individual experience must be routed through the collectivity that is a population on Foucault's understanding, so too must media's impact on individual experience be channeled through its more primordial—and largely environmental—impact on collective (preindividual and impersonal) sensation. In the case of media, this can appear as an empowering opportunity, for it affords individuals an opportunity to experience and to acquire some agency over the means through which their behavior is shaped by forces that are not exactly external to their constitutive individualizations but that are certainly beyond the grasp of their "proper," onboard modes of access. As I have argued elsewhere,[53] the fundamental result of this situation, which is itself the product of a basic transformation in the status of media itself, is that the bulk of "our" experience, meaning what happens beneath the individual level or, equivalently, what remains aleatory and unpredictable from that level can be accessed at the level of the individual—through conscious perceptual life—only once it is "fed-forward" into the future, into a just-to-come moment of individual, consciously self-referenced experience.

To begin to make good on the promise of Foucault's late work for thinking twenty-first-century media, we would do well to return to the question of resistance, in order to discern how a refusal of a preconstituted form of individuality—a "no" to some media institution or other, be it Stiegler's global televisual fluxes or Facebook's lure of immediate connectivity—opens a different, subindividual counter-scene of media experience, where what Foucault thematizes as life resistance can morph into creativity and, more precisely, into a kind of creativity that stems from a basic openness to the broader resonances linking the individualizations that make up the singularities of our lives and the impersonal, collective domain of sensibility from which they emerge. One key element that media brings to the fore is the role of technics in this "interface" with sensibility, specifically, the role of technics not simply as mechanisms for control (hypersynchronizing the time of our experience in Stiegler's vision,[54] or generating indelible data traces in Galloway and Thacker's[55]) but as a means for intensifying individual and collective experience precisely by channeling the singularities of individual life through a collective (preindividual and impersonal) individuation that directly modulates what can impact experience only from the environmental outside.

Notes

1 Mark B. N. Hansen, "Ubiquitous Sensation: Toward an Atmospheric, Collective, and Microtemporal Model of Media," in *Throughout: Art and Culture Emerging with Ubiquitous Computing*, ed. Ulrik Ekman (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012), forthcoming.

2 See Bernard Stiegler, *La technique et le temps*, vol. 3, *Le temps du cinéma et la question du mal-être* (*Technics and Time*, vol. 3, *Cinematic Time and the Question of Malaise*) (Paris: Galilée, 2001); see also Stiegler, "The Time of Cinema: On the 'New Order' and 'Cultural Exception,'" *Teknehma* 4 (1998): 62–114.

3 Maurizio Lazzarato, "From Biopower to Biopolitics," *Pli* 13 (2002): 99–113, 106.

4 Mark Poster, "Foucault and Databases: Participatory Surveillance," ch. 3 in *The Mode of Information: Poststructuralism and Social Context* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 69–98.

5 Ibid.

6 Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

7 Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies," in *Negotiations, 1972–1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 177–182; Deleuze, "Control and Becoming," in *Negotiations*, 169–76; and Deleuze, "Having an Idea in Cinema," in *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy, and Culture*, ed. Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 14–19.

8 Without making any reference to Foucault, Mark Poster has underscored the massive imbalance between the position of these minor works within Deleuze's corpus and the amount of attention they have received from media critics. Poster's explanation centers—rightly in my opinion—on the total absence of any protracted discussion of media in Deleuze's more "weighty" work: "Gilles Deleuze provides another variation of the absence of media in twentieth-century theory. . . . The one exception within Deleuze's considerable and weighty corpus is the short essay 'Postscript on Control Societies' (1990), whose title suggests its marginal position in his thought. In the English-speaking discursive community, thinkers have so yearned for a discussion of media that this slight piece has gained attention and praise far exceeding its modest standing" (Poster, "An Introduction to Vilém Flusser's *Into the Universe of Technical Images* and *Does Writing Have a Future?*," in *Into the Universe of Technical Images*, by Vilém Flusser, trans. Nancy Ann Roth [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011], xxi).

9 Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies."

10 See, for example, Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson, eds., *The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006); Karl Palmås, "Predicting What You'll Do Tomorrow: Panspectric Surveillance and the Contemporary Corporation," *Surveillance and Society* 8, no. 3 (2011): 338–54; and Greg Elmer, *Profiling Machines: Mapping the Personal Information Economy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

11 Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 40.

12 Ibid., 57. To be fair to Galloway and Thacker, let me take note here of their gentle

rebuke to Deleuze for conceptualizing control as an abstraction. For them, control—and the information it depends on—is always material: "While Deleuze referred to it as 'free-floating,' control does not in fact flit through the ether dissociated from real physical life. Quite the opposite is true. Control is only seen when it materializes (though in a paradoxical way), and it aims constantly to make itself 'matter,' to make itself relevant" (ibid., 41).

13 For example, Galloway and Thacker write: "There are (at least) two meanings of the phrase 'life-resistance': (1) life is what resists power, and (2) to the extent that it is co-opted by power, 'life itself' must be resisted by living systems" (*The Exploit*, 78–79).

14 Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit*, 40–41.

15 Lazzarato, "From Biopower to Biopolitics," 105.

16 See Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit*, 41.

17 Lazzarato, "From Biopower to Biopolitics," 106.

18 Xavier Guchet, *Pour un humanisme technologique: culture, technique et société dans la philosophie de Gilbert Simondon* (*Towards a Technological Humanism: Culture, Technics, and Society in the Philosophy of Gilbert Simondon*) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2010), 12, my translation.

19 My move to position Simondon as a benchmark for rethinking the individual is seconded by Dominique Lecourt. In a recent article, "On Individualism," Lecourt invokes Simondon as the culmination of a minor trajectory in the thinking of the individual. Following in the wake of Epicurus, Baruch Spinoza, Goethe, and Denis Diderot, Simondon "has masterfully applied himself to demonstrating that the notion of the individual related to the human being cannot be reduced to a social atom." In particular, Simondon raises "the *question* that modern individualism wants to avoid: the individuation or individualization of human beings. As soon as it is formulated, this question clearly indicates what is important: the process without end which means that a human individual has never been and will never be identifiable with or reducible to this other type of individual, the billiard ball. We continuously construct ourselves, form, reform and deform ourselves. The individual literally shapes himself, situating himself in relation to the field of forces in which he is placed by his becoming [*devenir*] and that he helps to modify" (Lecourt, "On Individualism," *Angelaki* 9, no. 3 [2004]: 11–15, 14).

20 Gilbert Simondon, *L'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information* (*Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*) (Grenoble: Jerôme Millon, 2005). This work comprises the two parts of Simondon's principal thesis, hitherto published separately as *L'individu et sa genèse psychico-biologique* (*The Individual and Its Psychical-Biological Genesis*) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964) and *L'individuation psychique et collective* (*Psychic and Collective Individuation*) (Paris: Aubier, 1989). In the following, I will cite the individual volumes of Simondon's work; all translations are my own.

21 Simondon quoted in Francisco Varela, "Organism: A Meshwork of Selfless Selves," in *Organism and the Origins of the Self*, ed. Alfred I. Tauber (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991), 79–107.

22 It nonetheless respects Varela's ethical principle since the perspective on individuation occurs from within the process of individuation. See Francisco J. Varela, *Principles of Biological Autonomy* (New York: North Holland, 1979). I discuss Varela's ethical principle, in relation to the work of Cornelius Castoriadis and Simondon, in "System-

Environment Hybrids," in *Emergence and Embodiment: New Essays in Second-Order Systems Theory*, ed. Bruce Clarke and Mark Hansen (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

23 Simondon, *L'individu et sa genèse psychico-biologique*, 141.

24 By characterizing the potentiality of the environment as "metastability," Simondon differentiates it from the virtual on account of its peculiar actuality: urging us to refrain from conceiving "preindividual reality" as "pure virtuality," Simondon insists that we see it as "veritable reality charged with potentials that are actually existing as potentials, that is to say, as the energy of a metastable system" (*L'individuation psychique et collective*, 210).

25 Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault*, vol. 3, *1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 2000), 336.

26 Michel Foucault, *Sécurité, territoire, population: Cours au Collège de France (1977–78)*, ed. François Ewald and Alessandro Fontana (Paris: Seuil/Gallimard, 2004).

27 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990).

28 Judith Butler, "Subjection, Resistance, Resignification: Between Freud and Foucault," ch. 3 in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997).

29 This institutional capacity corresponds to what Cornelius Castoriadis analyzes as the "imaginary institution of society"; see Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).

30 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977), 30–31, emphasis added; hereafter cited parenthetically by page number.

31 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990). Some indication of this hegemony of the repressive hypothesis, both in reference to Foucault's work on the history of sexuality and to his project more generally, comes by way of Eve Sedgwick and Adam Frank's taxonomy, in their 1995 polemic against a certain antibiological institutionalization of "theory," of five "common ways of (mis)understanding Foucault's discussion of the repressive hypothesis." All five ways—prohibition as productive, as internalized and voluntary, as multichanneled and extrajuridical, as symbolic, and as essentialized—concur that "some version of prohibition is the most important thing to understand." Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank, "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins," *Critical Inquiry*, no. 21 (1995): 496–522, 501, n3.

32 Consider, for example, the way Butler plays Foucault against Jacques Lacan: "In *The History of Sexuality, volume 1*, . . . there is both a rejection of 'a single locus of Revolt'—which would presumably include the psyche, the imaginary, or the unconscious within its purview—and an affirmation of the multiple possibilities of resistance enabled by power itself. For Foucault, resistance cannot be *outside the law in another register (the imaginary) or in that which eludes the constitutive power of the law*" (*Psychic Life*, 97–98). Moreover, by claiming that the very attachment to the law becomes the vehicle for resisting the symbolic injunction to be this or that subject, Butler inscribes resistance within the symbolic and thereby, in effect, lends legitimacy to the law. Butler concludes, "For Foucault, the symbolic produces the possibility of its own subversions, and

these subversions are unanticipated effects of symbolic interpellations" (ibid., 99). In short, by making the desire for the repressive law the *sole* means for expressing freedom (e.g., for contesting identities imposed on us), Butler effectively reimposes the constraining force of the symbolic by other means: in the end, *it is still the law that determines desire*.

33 Pierre Macherey, "Towards a Natural History of Norms," in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, ed. and trans. Timothy J. Armstrong (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 176–91, 176.

34 Before setting about to answer this question, Macherey multiplies the division between negative and positive norms according to two important configurations that bear directly on Foucault's texts in both synchronic and diachronic frameworks. First, Macherey notes the simultaneous, though certainly asymmetrical, presence of *both* valences of normativity in Foucault's texts: *Madness and Civilization* (New York: Vintage, 1988) presents madness at once as an exclusionary mechanism (on the basis of unreason) and as a liberating one (on the basis of alienation). *Discipline and Punish* shows how punishment can expose the boundary of the social (placing those who transgress beyond the pale of humanity) and yet also reflect the ideal of the social as an integrated whole (by deploying a principle of transparency). *The History of Sexuality* links sexual pleasure both with external control (repression) and liberation (the almost limitless expansion which constitutes it as sexuality following the "positive impulse" of biopower). All three cases are bound together by a "common orientation": each in turn "encounters the same dilemma, confronting two practices opposed to the norm, which make of it a principle of exclusion or integration" (Macherey, "Natural History," 177), yielding on the one hand, the norm of knowledge and, on the other, the norm of power. Alongside or "transversal to" this thesis regarding the double deployment of normativity in Foucault's texts, Macherey introduces a second configuration or "dilemma" that underscores the issue of Foucault's development *across* the very texts just cited: here Foucault's early texts (Macherey mentions *Madness and Civilization* but one might include aspects of *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, volume 1) are marked by their orientation toward the constitution of a pattern of abnormality, whereas his final work (culminating in what finally emerged as *The History of Sexuality*, particularly the two later volumes) displays a precisely opposite orientation toward the constitution of a pattern of normality. The problematic of Foucault's work must be situated at the intersection of these two "lines of alternatives": "The first . . . deals with the norm's relationship to 'its objects,' a relationship which could be either internal or external according to whether it refers to a boundary (that is, the norm in the juridical sense) or to a limit (that is, the norm in the biological sense). The second deals with the norm's relationship to its 'subjects' which, at the same time as it excludes or integrates these latter according to the first relationship, also disqualifies or identifies them, in terms of recognition or non-recognition, in such a way as to place them on one side or another in a way which is separated or distinguished by the norm" (Macherey, "Natural History," 178).

35 Macherey, "Natural History," 187–88, emphasis added.

36 Foucault's text originally appeared under the title "La vie: L'expérience et la science," *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 90, no. 1 (1985): 3–14.

37 Michel Foucault, introduction to Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological*, trans. Carolyn R. Fawcett (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 21–22, emphasis added.
38 Macherey, "Natural History," 188.
39 Ibid., 191.
40 Michel Foucault, "Les mailles du pouvoir," in *Dits et écrits*, vol. 4, *1954–1988* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 182–201, 194, my translation.
41 Canguilhem, *The Normal*, 23–24.
42 Ibid., 21–22.
43 Foucault, *Sécurité*, 72; here and throughout these are my translations.
44 Ibid., 72–73.
45 For example, "I believe that from this moment when, within the analysis of wealth, one begins to consider the subject-object that is the population, with all destabilizing effects that the latter has had in the field of reflection and economic practice, all at once one has stopped doing an analysis of wealth and one has opened a new domain of knowledge—political economy" (Foucault, *Sécurité*, 78–79).
46 Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit*, 59–60.
47 Ibid., 78.
48 Foucault, *Sécurité*, 77.
49 Ibid., 73.
50 Tiziana Terranova, "Futurepublic: On Information Warfare, Bio-racism and Hegemony as Noopolitics," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 14, no. 3 (2007): 125–45, 136.
51 There Foucault observes: "What one sees appear now is . . . the set of mechanisms which are going to make pertinent to the government or to those who govern quite specific phenomena that are not exactly individual phenomena, although . . . the individuals figure in it in a certain manner and the processes of individualization are quite specific to it. It is an entirely different manner of engaging the relation collective/individual, social body in its totality/elementary fragmentation; it is an entirely different way that will be at issue in what one calls the population" (Foucault, *Sécurité*, 68).
52 Terranova, "Futurepublic," 136–37.
53 Mark B. N. Hansen, "Ubiquitous Sensibility," in *Communication Matters: Materialist Approaches to Media, Mobility, and Networks*, ed. Jeremy Packer and Steven B. Crofts Wiley (New York: Routledge, 2011), 53–65.
54 See Stiegler's discussion of the industrialization of consciousness. He argues that the spatiality of tertiary retention, by which he means technically recorded, industrially manufactured memories, "permits the *channeling of the diversity of fluxes* not only by retaining their attention to a single moment, . . . but by inaugurating thereby processes of selection in primary retentions, processes of selection by secondary retentions under the control of tertiary retentions that can be selected *synchronically*, 'directed,' and *adopted* on some occasions by millions or tens of millions of consciousnesses every day." He continues: "*The end of the twentieth* century thus witnesses the constitution of an immense *market of consciousnesses*, devoted to becoming global beyond all barriers" (*La technique et le temps*, vol. 3, 117, my translation).
55 For example, "We long not for the reestablishment of lost traditions of solidification and naturalization as seen in patriarchy or conservatism. We long for the opposite memory: the past as *less* repressive from the perspective of informatic media. Tele-

vision was a huge megaphone. The internet is a high-bandwidth security camera. We are nostalgic, then, for a time *when organisms didn't need to produce quantitative data about themselves, for a time when one didn't need to report back*" (Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit*, 124). As if answering Deleuze's call to "create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control" (Deleuze, "Control and Becoming," 175), Galloway and Thacker advocate a "tactics of nonexistence" that seeks to evade the datafication of experience: "The twentieth century will be remembered as the last time there existed nonmedia. In the future there will be a coincidence between happening and storage. After universal standards of identification are agreed on, real-time tracking technologies will increase exponentially, such that almost any space will be iteratively archived over time. . . . Space will become fully rewindable, fully simulated at all available time codes. Henceforth the lived environment will be divided into identifiable zones and nonidentifiable zones, and the nonidentifiables will be the shadowy new criminal classes" (Galloway and Thacker, *The Exploit*, 132).

Victorian novelists were the first to confront the problem of the relationship between themselves as individuals and what Michel Foucault calls “man-as-species” or “population.” This is a problem for theorists of liberal democracy as well. In his 1975–76 lectures at the Collège de France, the English translation titled *“Society Must Be Defended,”* Foucault offers his most comprehensive explanation as to why the disciplinary procedures aimed at producing self-governing individuals required supplementary policies that dealt with the population at large and so gave rise during the nineteenth century to a body of semiofficial policies that form the basis of a new form of government: biopolitics. Even here, however, he stops short of acknowledging the difficulty of articulating the subject presupposed by liberal societies to the object of biopower he elsewhere calls “population.” I show how gender simultaneously exposes the biological continuity underlying these different models of collectivity and transforms that continuity into difference.