
Deleuze and New Technology aims to adapt Deleuze’s thought in order to reflect on contemporary technological advances through the understanding of their functions and the interpretations of their possibilities. This in itself is a fruitful avenue for research because much of Deleuze’s work runs parallel to the features of contemporary technology (for example, the rhizome and the network), yet Deleuze rarely tackled the subjects of new technologies and new media directly. He also didn’t live to see the advent of web 2.0. Each essay references at least one of Deleuze’s well-known collaborations with Felix Guttari extensively. More specifically, the essays reference: Anti-Oedipus, A Thousand Plateaus, What is Philosophy and Post Scripts on Societies of Control—the only essay in which Deleuze directly engaged ‘new technology.’ Several of the essays approach their topics from Deleuze’s entire oeuvre, starting with his work on Bergson and Nietzsche, through Difference and Repetition and up to What is Philosophy?

The collection is broken into two sections: “Control” and “Becoming.” The essays on control deal with Deleuze’s concept of the societies of control, the successor to Foucault’s societies of discipline. Each author varies on their acceptance of this concept; some authors fully accept the diagnosis while others offer critique and revision. Perhaps most interestingly, David Savat remarks that the societies of control do not completely take over the societies of discipline, or at least haven’t yet. Instead, Savat argues that the societies of control exist in a superposition with societies of discipline. In true Deleuzian fashion, these essays mark a spectrum of viewpoints on control societies rather than a binary opposition. The most common case examples presented throughout the work are that of digital control through networks and databases. Breaking from this form however is Abigail Bray’s essay, which examines control societies from the psychopharmaceutical aspect of control in the form of regulating behavior through medication. Each of these essays remains true to Deleuze’s empiricist caution that we must not be too quick to judge the societies of control until we have fully, but carefully, experimented with their possibilities.
Compared to the first set of essays, the second set isn’t as tightly connected conceptually; instead, each essay examines aspects of Deleuze’s philosophy in relation to an example or problematic of new technology. Among these essays are the following themes: examining the internet’s body without organs, the swarm as a molar construct and its relation to the concept, the opening of the body without organs through online gaming and the effects of gaming addiction, and the power of the false in relation to cinema. In “Becoming”, the essays cut across the political, theoretical and aesthetic, often in the same article.

*Deleuze and New Technology* stays true to Deleuzian discourse in that it remains a heterogeneous mixture of concepts and interpretations while always flowing from singular case examples. The clashing of interpretations between articles strengthens the work and shows that these problems are very much alive and demonstrates that the concepts formulated from these problematics are being contested today. If nothing else, it pushes us towards Deleuze’s two eternal recommendations: make sure to fully experiment before passing judgment and create new concepts.

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