

# Relationship between the physical body and the technology

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



Through the use of time-ordered activities, the physical experience of the individual has changed from an inner to an objective outer organization.

Through this enforced rhythm, the themes of the body and physical experience characterise classic urban theory, shaping views of hyperstimulation, phantasmagoria and alienation.

A feature of capitalism was the imposition of a work discipline that eliminated self-organisation by bringing production into mills, where techniques differed from those of the cottage industries. With refined techniques, the labor force divided on lines of knowledge and skill. "The nineteenth century demanded the functional specialization of man and his work; this specialization makes one individual incomparable to another ..., however, this specialization makes each man the more directly dependent upon the supplementary activities of all others" (Simmel, 1903). Surveillance strategies were enacted to negotiate pay or to track wages. This dictated the impersonal ordering of the clock, engendering feelings of alienation as the individual perceived themselves different from, yet the same as, their co-workers, yet had no room to explore this difference.

Explorations into this mechanized realm produced the phantasmagorical, characterized by fantastic imagery and incongruous juxtapositions. Through this imagery of the Dada, Surrealism and Letterism movements, the Situationists Movement arose, providing "their critique of modern culture, their celebration of creativity, and their stress on the immediate transformation of everyday life" (Marshall, 2000). 'Everyday' life, they maintain, deadens the mind into numb acceptance, while exploration of the surreal awakens subjectivity. This led to the concept of psychogeography as

part of the system of unitary urbanism or “ the study of specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals” (Situationnise Internationale, 1958).

Communications technology redefined subjectivity. Philosophically speaking, Francis Bacon considered technology a means to master nature. Rene Descartes held a mechanistic worldview controlled by mathematical principles, now seen in the ordered environment of the factory, computer and internet. “ The colonization of space and of time would constitute a ‘ universal telegraphics’ linking world languages, semiotics, and inventions into a global transfiguration of the earth and a truly human habitat (Mitchum, 1994, p. 23). New technologies change society quickly as images are captured and revealed through exhibitions that bring our attention to technology in our ‘ everyday’ lives.

Coupling the phantasmagorical with technological achievements reflects on the relationship between the physical body and the technology that helps that body function. As Donna Haraway says, “ In terms of the general shift from thinking of individuals as isolated from the ‘ world’ to thinking of them as nodes on networks, the 1990s may well be remembered as the beginning of the cyborg era” (Kunzru, 1997). The post-human view regards the body as the original prosthesis, so that replacing it with other attachments becomes a continuation of a process (Hayles, 1999). Even calling herself a cyborg, “ For Haraway, the realities of modern life happen to include a relationship between people and technology so intimate that it’s no longer possible to tell where we end and machines begin” (Kunzru, 1997).