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About

My work lies on the intersection of three intellectual traditions: recent continental philosophy (particularly Levinas, Derrida, Baudrillard and Stiegler), German Idealism (especially Kant and Hegel), and the Frankfurt School critique of culture, technology and capitalization.

My work is located in the critical tradition of social theory that began with the Frankfurt School. This tradition is concerned with reinterpreting Enlightenment ideals of freedom, subjectivity, culture and ethics in the light of the social, economic and technological trajectories of industrial society. My most recent research has focused on four areas:

1. Social Implications of Technology: the social and political consequences of technological transformations of the body, labour, memory and organic reproduction
2. Media, Culture and Identity: the commodification of culture and the effects of new media networks on civil society and democracy.
3. Politics and Sociology of Happiness: the relationship between the rational-technological trajectory of modernity and the emergence of happiness and wellbeing as key socio-political categories in Western democracies
4. Global Ethics and Cosmopolitanism: the transformation of the international economy through new information technologies and the possibility of new economies of contribution.

I have developed an internationally recognized body of research that has focused on the relationship between contemporary critical thought and the social, political, and technological evolution of modernity.

Biography

I have developed an internationally recognized body of research that has focused on the relationship between contemporary critical thought and the social, political, and technological evolution of modernity. My first book, *Truth and Social Science: From Hegel to Deconstruction* (Sage, 1998), is the groundwork for my research: it gives a historical account of the relationship between the explanatory categories of positivist and objectivist social science and the idea of a critical theory which seeks to question the reifying effects of such analyses.

Culture and Identity: Critical Theories (Sage/TCS, 2003), presents an account of the most significant contributors to the modernity-postmodernity debate and traces its evolution through the theoretical questions posed by virtual media, technological prosthesis, and the regime of global capitalization. In particular, the book specifies the effects of cultural disorientation on Western democracies, and examines the radicalization of traditional identity structures (cultural, religious, and political) that has taken place within the 'New World Order' of neoliberal capitalism.

Marxism After Modernity: Politics, Technology and Social Transformation (Palgrave, 2006), focuses on the relationship between Marx's original designation of the commodity form, the evolution of the global information economy, and the new possibilities of resistance, adaptation, and political agency that have been theorized by Derrida, Deleuze, Negri, and Stiegler. The exposition traces the development of capitalism into a global network of technologically mediated exchange, the transformation of traditional forms of class politics, and the emergence of new theories of political counter- hegemony. The book establishes the foundation for the research agenda I have pursued in my most recent work, including the technological commodification of the body, new forms of cosmopolitan democracy, and the emergence of happiness as a core political ideal within the commodified relations of late capitalist societies.

The initial purpose of Politics of Happiness (Bloomsbury, 2013) was to frame a response to the neo-utilitarian literature that has come to dominate questions of social wellbeing (Richard Layard, Robert E. Lane et al). The broader intention of the book however is to specify how contemporary ideals of happiness have been formed through the ideologies that have shaped the history of Western modernity (liberalism, socialism, fascism, nationalism, and religious orthodoxy). The exposition traces the specific definitions of self-fulfillment, collective identity, and moral satisfaction that are characteristic of these ideologies and, most importantly, the way they have been transformed through the pressures and conflicts of the global-technological economy.

I have published extensively in international journals over the last five years. My most recent publications are: 'The Spectre and the Simulacrum: History After Baudrillard' (*Theory, Culture and Society*, 2008), 'Machiavelli's Double: Power, Simulation, and Hyper-Sovereignty', (*International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*, 2012), 'Nostalgia and Austerity, or, The Never-Ending Dream of Excess' (*European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2013). I currently have articles on Bernard Stiegler's work on capitalism and technology in press with *Theory, Culture and Society* and *Thesis Eleven*. The common themes that run through each of these publications are: a concern with the fate of culture as the locus of spirit and reflection; the hyper-commodification of desire and the planetary exhaustion of resources; and the possibility of framing new forms of cross-border recognition and economies of contribution.

Teaching

During my time at Birmingham I have developed a strong relationship between my teaching and my research interests. I currently teach on the BA Sociology Programme and have developed undergraduate modules on: Politics of Representation (Level 2), Technology and Society (Level 3), and the Sociology of Self and Everyday Life (Level 1). I also contribute to Modern Social Theory (Level 2) and Contemporary Social Theory (Level 3), and to the Modern Political Ideologies module in POLSIS.

At postgraduate level I am the convener of the MA in Social and Political Theory, to which I contribute a module on Marxism, Late-Capitalism, and Postmodernity.

Postgraduate supervision

I have supervised ten PhD students to completion of their theses. Three of the most recent were on Walter Benjamin and urban ruins, the influence of new media technologies on political change in the Philippines, and the concept of biopolitical production in Hardt and Negri's Empire. I am currently supervising three doctoral theses, two of which are funded by the AHRC, and one by the Ford Foundation. Four of my former doctoral students were funded by the ESRC.

I am interested in supervising PhD theses in the following areas:

- The Social and Political Implications of Technology
- Media, Culture and Democracy
- The politics and Sociology of Happiness
- Neo-Marxist theories of culture and capitalization
- Aesthetic theory
- Recent French social theory

Research

My most recent research is focused on the social, economic, and political implications of techno-scientific innovation. I am particularly interested in the increasing antagonism between the imperatives of the information economy and the reflexive culture of civil society. I am currently working on a book for Polity - *Disorientations: Bernard Stiegler and the Politics of Technology* - that will develop the major themes of this antagonism: the fate of citizenship in the global economy, the impact of virtual communications on social and political solidarity, the social consequences of biotechnologies and genetic science, and the appropriation of social memory by electronic archiving systems.

Other activities

I am editor of the Theory, Technology and Society series published by Ashgate Press. I devised the series in 2009 and so far it has published fifteen books on the social implications of technology. Topics covered include ethics and the human genome project, digital modeling of the human body, public perceptions of genetic technologies, and neo-liberalism and technological innovation. I am also a member of the editorial board of the *International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society* and of the Bauman Institute at the University of Leeds.

I regularly review articles for *Theory, Culture and Society*, *Thesis Eleven*, and *International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society*. I am currently external examiner for the BA Sociology Degrees at the University of Sussex and the University of Lancaster.

Publications

Books: Published

2013: *Politics of Happiness* (Bloomsbury)

2006: *Marxism After Modernity: Politics, Technology and Social Transformation* (Palgrave).

2003: *Culture and Identity: Critical Theories* (Sage/TCS).

1998: *Truth and Social Science: From Hegel to Deconstruction* (Sage).

Books: Forthcoming

2015: *Disorientations: Bernard Stiegler and the Politics of Technology* (Bloomsbury)

Articles: Published

2012 'Machiavelli's Double: Power, Simulation, and Hyper-Sovereignty', *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*, Vol. 9, no. 3.

2012 'Nostalgia and Austerity, or, The Never-Ending Dream of Excess', *European Journal of Popular Culture*, Vol, 3, no. 1, pp. 23-27.

2008: 'The Spectre and the Simulacrum: History After Baudrillard', *Theory*, *Culture and Society*. Vol. 25, no. 6, pp. 69-87.

2007: 'Technology and the Ethics of Penality', *Journal of Knowledge, Technology and Society*, Vol. 3, no 2, pp. 1-6.

2007: 'Untimely Agitations: Derrida, Klein and Hardt & Negri on the Idea of Anti-Capitalism', *Journal for Cultural Research*, Vol. 11, no.1, pp. 41-56.

2006: 'Spectres of Class: Marxism, Deconstruction and the Politics of Affiliation', *Journal for Cultural Research*, Vol. 10, no 1, pp. 1-22.

2000: 'Science, Technology and Modernity: Beck and Derrida on the Politics of Risk', *Cultural Values*, Vol. 4, no.1, pp. 101-126.

1998: 'Politics and Enlightenment: Kant and Derrida on Cosmopolitan Responsibility', *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 197-222.

1998: 'Postmodernity and the Ethics of Care: Situating Bauman's Social Theory', *Cultural Values*, Vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 87-116.

Articles In Press

2014: 'The Politics of Spirit in Stiegler's Techno-Pharmacology', *Theory, Culture and Society*.

2014: 'Human Prosthesis and the Capitalization of Desire: Stiegler and Negri on the Future of Marxism', *Thesis Eleven.*

Chapters in Edited Books

2013: 'On the Liquidity of Evil: Modernity and the Dissolution of Ethics in Bauman's Social Theory', in *Liquid Sociology: Metaphor in Bauman's Writings on Modernity*, M. Davis (ed.), Ashgate (in press).

2009: 'Fellow Travellers and Homeless Souls: Said's Critical Marxism', in *Edward Said and the Literary, Social and Political World*, R. Ghosh (ed.), Routledge.

2001: 'Postmodernity and the Ethics of Care: Situating Bauman's Social Theory', in *Sage Masters in Modern Social Theory*, P. Beilhartz (ed.), London, Sage.

Book Reviews

2011: Jean Baudrillard's *Carnival and Cannibal, or, The Play of Global Antagonism* (Seagull Press, 2010), *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 128-134.

2010: Nigel Tubbs' *Education in Hegel* (Continuum, 2008), *Studies in the Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 1, no. 29, pp. 89-96.

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