Bernard Stiegler
A glossary of terms

As the work of French philosopher Bernard Stiegler receives greater attention in the English-speaking world, more and more readers are discovering his rich lexicon of terms. Hence an (abridged!) glossary for the uninitiated:

- **anamnesis**, the process of recollection or remembrance; direct dialogical interaction without having to rely on external memory supports; an antonym to hypomnemesis; adopted from Plato.
- **attention**, one's ability to become absorbed, and particularly the capturing and codifying of absorption.
- **desire, the waning of**, the tendential fall in desire and libidinal energies; as desire wanes, drives increase; contrast with Marx's theory of the tendential fall in the rate of profit, Jameson's theory of the waning of affect, and Žižek's theory of the decline in symbolic efficiency.
- **grammatization**, the process of describing and formalizing human behavior into letters, words, writing, and code so that it can be reproduced; compare to Weber's concept of "rationalization" and Agre's concept of "capture"; adapted from Derrida.
- **hypomnemata**, the making-technical of memory; the hypomnemata include all kinds of memory substitutes and externalizations such as writing, photography, machines, etc.; an antonym to anamnese.
- **I-don't-give-a-fuckism (je-m'en-foutisme)**, the tendency toward social irresponsibility; to neglect the long term for short term interests.
- **mystagogy**, mystical or religious teachings, as opposed to reason, philosophy, or instruction.
- **nootechniques**, technologies of spirit or mind; often construed as normatively positive.
- **organology**, the industrialization of organization; compare to the concept of protocol; often construed as normatively negative.
- **pharmacology**, the condition of duality in which something is both poison and cure, bringing both benefit and harm; adopted from Derrida.
- **psychopolitics**, a politics of psychical formations; comparable to Foucault's "biopolitics"; often construed as normatively positive.
- **psychopower (psychopouvoir)**, power that is invested in the psychological or immaterial realm; comparable to Foucault's "biopower"; often construed as normatively negative.
- **psychotechniques**, writing and reading, the book, Kant and the Enlightenment, the republic of letters; psychotechniques *cultivate* attention rather than destroy it; often construed as normatively positive.
- **psychotechnologies**, games, computers, SMS, etc.; these constitute part of the culture industry; often construed as normatively negative.
- **retentions**, primary retentions are sense perceptions, secondary retentions are memories, tertiary retentions are media or culture (i.e. cultural mnemonics or what is sometimes called cultural memory); adopted from Husserl.
- **stupidity (bêtise)**, irresponsibility, the corruption of attention, the rise in incivility and boorishness.
- **synaptogenesis**, the formation of synapses in the brain during cognitive development.
- **transindividual**, the realm of culture, the cultural unconscious, memory that transits across individuals and generations; adopted from Simondon.