

Virtuality and Control In Spielberg's *Minority Report* by Jason Skonieczny

Introduction

Stephen Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002), just as well as any French New Wave film, belongs to Gilles Deleuze's characterization of modern as opposed to classical cinema, "time-image" as opposed to "movement-image" cinema. Deleuze distinguishes the two by saying, "However close its relation to classical [pre-war/movement-image] cinema, modern [post-war/time-image] cinema asks the question: what are the new forces at work in the image, and the new signs invading the screen?" (Deleuze, 271) In characterizing the time-image, Deleuze is concerned with a kind of filmic reflexivity and with the power to perfect the way that cinema intervenes into the political. *Minority Report* is also clearly reflexive but in a manner such that resistance is reterritorialized or captured even as the film—and Spielberg and Tom Cruise in interviews about the film—critically reflect upon contemporary commercialism, national security and the American justice system. This becomes especially clear in light of Michel Foucault's critique of the disciplinary techniques of modern institutions, and Deleuze's idea of the "control society" that is replacing modern "disciplinary societies" as the preeminent form of social power in the contemporary. As Stuart Klawans wrote in reviewing the film for *The Nation*, "In the monumental edifice of *Minority Report*, as in a palatial tomb, you may encounter something madly idiosyncratic, yet absolutely characteristic of its culture" (Klawans, 56). Klawans writes further that more than constructing an argument, *Minority Report* "contrives a delirium" around the issues that most reviewers found as crucial themes in the film: predetermination and free will, the antinomies of personal privacy and justice or national security, and the future of advertising and visual technology. But the film's delirium is revealing as it struggles to critique the social meaning of changing visual technologies in envisioning and problematizing its Washington, D.C. of the future.

Tracing the Delirium

Adapted from a short story by Phillip K. Dick, *Minority Report* takes place in the year 2051. The District of Columbia is free of murder due to a development in the police and justice system called "Precrime." Precrime employs three psychics or "precognitives", suspended in water in a semi-conscious state, and connected through brain wave monitors to a computerized apparatus with a complex interactive image display system. The psychics envision future murders so that police officers can review fragmented recordings of the visions on the interactive display and incarcerate the murderers before they commit the crime. During an investigation by the FBI interested in "taking Precrime national", conducted by Agent Danny Witwer (Colin Farrell), John Anderton (Tom Cruise), the chief officer of Precrime, is predicted to commit a murder. Anderton takes off on the run and goes so far as to kidnap one of the precognitive psychics, Agatha (Samantha Morton), in the hopes of discovering another hidden version of his future known as the "Minority Report".

Even after he discovers that he has no alternate future according to the psychics, he tries with a fervor that becomes less preventative and more curious about Precrime's implications for the nature of free will to discover the facts of the murder he is supposed to commit. Early in his time on the run, he confides in Lamar Burgess (Max Von Sydow), the founder of Precrime. So it is a surprise twist when it is revealed that Burgess murdered Anne Lively (Jessica Harper), mother of precognitive Agatha, in order to obtain custody over Agatha. Burgess feared Anderton would discover the truth about the murder in spite of his clever manipulations of the recorded Precrime visions and evidence. He "pre-framed" Anderton by preparing the perfect circumstances under which Anderton would commit murder. Once Anderton steals Agatha, shutting down Precrime, Burgess murders the FBI investigator Witwer as well. Anderton resists the temptation to murder—at the precise time predicted by Precrime—the man coerced by Burgess to pose as a child molester who kidnapped and murdered Anderton's lost son. But Anderton kills the predicted victim by accident immediately after the circumstances of the set-up are revealed and is eventually apprehended by the remaining Precrime officers.

Anderton's wife —estranged after the unsolved disappearance of their son—helps to rescue Anderton from incarceration in Precrime's prison. After Anderton publically displays footage of the real murder of Anne Lively by Burgess, conjured by the precognitives but previously hidden by Burgess, Anderton chases Lamar to the roof of a building overlooking Washington, D.C. In a climactic and confusing face-off between Anderton and Lamar, amidst talk about destiny in the face of a predicted future, Lamar — though predicted by Precrime to kill Anderton— shoots himself in the chest. The framing shows only their faces, so we are momentarily unsure whether or not Lamar has fulfilled his predicted destiny, by killing Anderton, or changed his destiny. In a final montage with a voiceover by Tom Cruise, it is explained that Precrime is closed, Anderton and his wife are back together and expecting a child, and the precognitives live in an isolated house on some unnamed northern shore somehow protected thereby from their disturbing visions. One happy family is reunited and another is formed.

Precrime's Actual and Virtual Images

What Gilles Deleuze calls the interplay between the actual and the virtual resonates importantly with the way that images and their relation to the future are figured in the Precrime apparatus from *Minority Report*. In *Cinema 1*, Deleuze discusses the images created by the cinema of the movement-image, or roughly speaking, pre-war cinema. The cinema of the movement-image details and creates action and plot movement through the creation of onscreen and off-screen spaces. In *Cinema 2* Deleuze discusses primarily the post-war European new-wave cinemas, the time-image cinema, in which movement becomes subordinated to time, action becomes subordinated to a play of reflexivity in which a whole new set of relations between image, subject, and reality are set up. Time-image reflexivity allowed cinema to encourage the transformation of subjective relations outside the cinema. In the time-image auteurs, a whole new space is opened for viewers to think along with cinema and reconsider the meaning and power of cinema over reality. Crucial to this new aspect of the time-image is Deleuze's understanding of the actual and the virtual. Deleuze writes that in the time-image,

...we can say that the actual image itself has a virtual image which corresponds to it like a double or a reflection. In Bergsonian terms, the real object is reflected in a mirror-image as in the virtual object which, from its side and simultaneously, envelops or reflects the real: there is 'coalescence' between the two... We recognize here the very specific genre of *description* which... instead of being concerned with a supposedly distinct object constantly both absorbs and creates its own object (Deleuze, *Cinema 2* 68).

To say that the actual and the virtual have coalesced into a single image in cinema is to say that we have become dependent upon visual fantasies and fictions that shape our reality. It was the achievement of the new waves to consider the possibility of a more active relation to reality through the cinema and visual technologies that make important connections within our actuality.

The virtual images that *Precrime* displays and that *Anderton* manipulates using a complex of electronic gloves and floating dials, these descriptions of murders yet-to-come, similarly create their own objects in that they provide the means of preventing the murders visualized by the psychics as yet to happen. On the other hand these are really visions of events yet to not happen, or events that are to be prevented by the *Precrime* officers. These false descriptions create their own object such that the object created is different from the object depicted. We are told at the beginning of the film that there has not been a murder in Washington, D.C. since the introduction of *precrime*, though the film opens with one of these visions of a murder that is precisely not-to-happen. *Precrime* is itself a figure reflecting on visual technologies within the cinematic text of *Minority Report*, where a virtual image of an event, the murder that does not happen, plays upon, absorbs, and produces an actual image of an event, the capture and incarceration of the criminal made possible by the false image.

Precrime is a kind of film within the film of *Minority Report*. For Deleuze as well as in Spielberg's film, reflexivity, the film within the film, inevitably leads us to think of conspiracy. For Deleuze, the questions are something like, how have our conditions of visual existence, our subjection to the cinema, as to language, architecture and so on been shaped by powerful regimes, "conspiracies" that may need reevaluation and changing? This

... film within the film ... a method of working... a mode of the crystal image. If this mode is used, then it has to be grounded on considerations capable of giving it a higher justification. It will be observed that, in all the arts, the work within the work has often been linked to the consideration of a surveillance, an investigation, a revenge, a conspiracy, or a plot... The cinema as art it self lives in a direct relation with a permanent plot [complot], an international conspiracy which conditions it from within, as the most intimate and most indispensable enemy (Deleuze, *Cinema 2* 77).

In Spielberg's film, it is a conspiracy or plot that has made *Precrime* what it is: the cover-up of the murder by *Precrime* founder Lamar Burgess of precognitive Agatha's mother. But the conspiracy behind *Precrime* is seen to be perpetrated by just one man, Burgess, who gets what he deserves. Spielberg's *Minority Report* seems, in terms of its action, more to contain within the figure of Burgess and within a single verifiable founding crime the conspiracy that founds *Precrime*. Viewers are not encouraged to look within the plot of the film for a wider capitalistic plot behind Burgess's bureaucratic corruption as they are in, for instance, Fritz Lang's *Mabuse* series.

On the other hand, the directors and films Deleuze selects for his time-image cinema are directors whose films threw into question the international capitalistic schema, Welles and Godard, for instance. Jean Luc Godard's film *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (1968), operated to incite the will to change reality by making reference to an "outside" of cinema by drawing attention not to a kind of figure of evil within the filmic fiction but to the fiction's relationship to external reality. Interspersing images of the Vietnam war, products, monologues about the exploitation of the working class family by corporate forces in France, or empty shots of the city of Paris within a fictional story could be thought to encourage creative thinking beyond that predetermined by cinematic convention. *Minority Report's* action, on the other hand, with its tidy voiceover epilogue at the end of the film precludes the possibility of looking outside the fiction of the film for determinants of its "conspiracy".

Product Placement and Invasions of Privacy

But to what extent does the mise-en-scene of the film betray the plot in this respect, asking deeper questions about the conspiracy that has conditioned the fictional Precrime than analysis of the narrative alone would suggest? Much of the hype surrounding the film and many reviews of the film focus on the increasing ability of the advertisers of *Minority Report's* future to monitor consumption habits and to target consumers. In the future of *Minority Report*, retinal scanners are ubiquitous in public spaces and allow advertisers to single out consumers on the street and in stores. A great deal of the film's suspense is drawn from Anderton's attempts to evade the police dragnet facilitated by the commercial scanners as he flees a subway or breaks out of a moving taxi, while the advertisements call out his name. Eventually he has his eyes surgically replaced by an underground doctor to avoid the scans. In one of the more humorous moments of the film, he wanders into a Gap clothing store and is hailed as "Mr. Nakamura," presumably the deceased former owner of his new-used eyes, and is asked by the recorded voice whether he enjoyed the tank tops he bought last time he was there.

Even more than the idea of Precrime, this vision of advertising is probably the most stunning techno-social component of the film's future and certainly a less confusing one. It was dreamed up by a well-publicized think tank of futurists assembled by Spielberg prior to production. At once an opportunity for product placement (which Spielberg has invited since his use of Reese's Pieces in E.T. and which trimmed a fifth of the budget from *Minority Report*) the retinal scan advertisements were also an opportunity for a critique of the future of product placement within everyday life embodied at present by the internet. This form of product placement is certainly not the kind of critical statement in Godard's *Two Or Three Things I Know About Her* where the film ends with a long take of a number of household products arranged on a field of grass, perhaps as a kind of mock-up of a television advertisement. But *Minority Report* is not without some kind of critical edge. Tom Cruise, who was by all accounts deeply involved in Fox Studios' development of the film, remarked on this at length in an interview in the June 16, 2002 *Boston Sunday Globe* and explained his ideas of the film's attempt at social critique:

"Look where we are right now," Cruise says. "Cameras in the streets. On the Internet. You know 'Hey, this person went to this site, this site, this site.' They know what you like, where you go, they know all that stuff.

But it's like anything. There are so many benefits for people. On the other hand, it can be abused. You've got to have a watchdog watch the watchdog watch the watchdog."

Then Cruise makes a leap, linking the issues in the film to the issues of the day. The idea of arresting people before they commit crimes may have seemed outlandish a few years ago when *Minority Report* was being developed. But now, faced with a constant stream of terrorist threats, security alerts, and investigative breakdowns of epic proportions, we find ourselves perched on the threshold of a *Minority Report* society. A place where suspects are held because they may be connected to terror plots. ...

"It's a dilemma," Cruise says, "because today, I don't want terrorists being able to walk down the street. And in order to ensure the safety of everyone, we're going to have to give up a little freedom in this country, but at the same time we have to take very strong measures to ensure that's not abused, can't be abused."

"Of course, it all depends on interpretation, and how it's used. I mean, right now they talk about people being detained. Well, who are these people? How do they know? Why?" (Kaufman)

Cruise's interview points to a connection between a sort of over-government and invasion of consumer privacy that is not an unobvious part of the contemporary imagination nor of the cooperation in *Minority Report's* future between advertisers and police in using the retinal scans. In *Minority Report's* press dossier on file at the Margaret Herrick Library in Los Angeles, Spielberg phrases quite clearly that the threat of the future is a threat to *privacy*. In assembling the think tank of futurists, Spielberg discovered,

The gradual loss of privacy was a near unanimous prediction. "The reason is not so people can spy on you," explains [screenwriter Scott] Frank, "but so they can sell to you. In the not too distant future, it is plausible that by scanning your eyes, your whereabouts will be tracked. They will keep track of what you buy, so they can keep on selling to you."

George Orwell's prophecy really comes true, not in the twentieth century but in the twenty-first," the director explains. "Big brother is watching us now and what little privacy we have will completely evaporate in twenty or thirty years, because technology will be able to see through walls, through rooftops, into the very privacy of our personal lives, into the sanctuary of our families." (Press Dossier)

There are some important differences, however, between critiques of conspiracy in Deleuze's account of his auteurs and in Spielberg's account of his concerns in producing *Minority Report*. Deleuze's concern with the aesthetics of cinema involved a concern over what cinema could make public, how it could function forcefully to provide a public space for reformulating, resisting, and affecting transformations in global dominion. For Spielberg and Cruise, at issue is the colonization of privacy. But there is an irony here in the kind of subtle reversal that the film perpetrates in making anxiety over privacy the most disturbing part of its future. Where in watching the retinal scan advertisements hail Anderton by name in the street, we come to wish for a kind of privacy or at least come to a new appreciation of our kind of privacy, but it is a privacy qua nameless anonymity, which was always the symbol of modern alienation. There is a very American sense in which the power to fight publicly for individual rights comes prior to the right to privacy, in that privacy is only secured by action and resistance to oppressive forces and the formation of a community, that may require surreptitious forms of resistance, but that nonetheless takes effect in a public sphere. Perhaps there some resistance figured in the final action of the film where the recorded vision of Burgess's murder of Anne Lively is played at the press conference announcing the national expansion of Precrime. This is a

kind of pirate-media direct action against the institution of Precrime. But again, the only conspiracy this little guerilla activity targets is within the institution of Precrime, Burgess's crime alone, rather than the more systemic "conspiracy"—to which Deleuze is referring—that extends to the entire techno-social apparatus "conditioning cinema from within." The future anxiety that brings *Minority Report's* future world to life corresponds to a kind of relinquishment ahead of time of public space and the increased desire to retreat into a private sphere protected only by the submission to state and corporate powers that are also at liberty to violate that privacy. This anxiety is attached to the historical aporia around which the film revolves.

The Criminal and the Normal

So focused on future and present, it seems the film and most reviewers forget how many of the issues in the film involving police and justice stretch back to the early modern age. Reviewer Chris Chang notes that Precrime's diffusion throughout the public space of Precrime psychic surveillance combined with the retinal scans mirrors the panopticism which Michel Foucault wrote was characteristic of modern institutions from when the earliest factories, schools, prisons, barracks, and hospitals began to be organized on a model of hierarchized surveillance in the late 18th century. But Foucault did not write that all of modern public space was under surveillance—as seems to be the case in *Minority Report's* society. Rather, subjects became conditioned to monitor themselves by being subjected to the architectural arrangements of the spaces of those specific institutions (factories, schools, prisons, barracks, and hospitals). Modernity, according to Foucault, involved centrally the construction of a private subjectivity that was always already subjected to power relations. This involved, conversely, the construction of a subjectivity that was always carefully restricted in the way that one would produce oneself in a public space. The effect was, in that sense, something like a precrime that was supposed to work on the level of the individual—the majority of normal individuals would become accustomed to submitting themselves to observation and discipline, and in that sense, prevent their own crimes before they might happen. Techniques of these dominant institutions to construct the private and restrict the public were specific to modernity but the production of an individual by social rites is of course much older. In this sense *Minority Report* figures a situation both past and present as regards the intervention of powerful institutions into privacy, but this situation is displaced onto the future as if it had not yet happened.

Perhaps the key idea of *Discipline and Punishment*, though, was that it was clear even to writers from the early 19th century that the schools, factories, and barracks organized on hierarchized surveillance did not only produce the normal law-abiding subject. The burgeoning institutions based on the model of the penitentiary produced the normal by also producing its corresponding abnormal, criminality or delinquency:

Prison and police form a twin mechanism; together they assure in the whole field of illegalities the differentiation, isolation and use of delinquency. In the illegalities, the police-prison system segments a manipulable delinquency. This delinquency, with its specificity, is a result of the system; but it also becomes a part and an instrument of it. So that one should speak of an ensemble whose three terms (police-prison-delinquency) support one another and form a circuit that is never interrupted. Police surveillance

provides the prison with offenders, which the prison transforms into delinquents, the targets and auxiliaries of police supervisions, which regularly send back a certain number of them to prison.... Judges are the scarcely resisting employees of this apparatus. They assist as far as they can in the constitution of this delinquency, that is to say, in the differentiation of illegalities, in the supervision, colonization and use of certain of these illegalities by the illegality of the dominant class. (Foucault, *Discipline* 282 emphasis mine).

It is of crucial importance that the same institutional techniques which produced docility in the majority of individuals, and purported to rid society of crime, were also equally responsible for producing a minority of delinquents who were equally useful to securing the docility of the majority:

Through the play of disciplinary differentiations and divisions, the nineteenth century constructed rigorous channels which, within the system, inculcated docility and produced delinquency by the same mechanisms (Foucault, *Discipline* 300 emphasis mine).

Furthermore the production of delinquency guaranteed widespread docility and opened the way for the expanded rights to legal criminality of larger financial and political powers:

...the very continuity of the processes that make the prison function... reduces the utility (or increases its inconveniences) of a delinquency accommodated as a specific illegality, locked up and supervised; thus the growth of great national or international illegalities directly linked to the political and economic apparatuses (financial illegalities, information services, arms and drug trafficking, property speculation) (Foucault, *Discipline* 306).

In other words, when the flows of desire that are ordinarily encoded through the disciplinary apparatuses of the schools and factories escape that encoding process, the disciplinary institutions at the same time ensured the return in the figure of abnormality or depoliticized criminality to aid in reencoding the normal, law-abiding subject. At the same time any criminal aspects of the general way of life under capital (the exploitation of the poor working class, the demolition of older lifeways by imperialism etc.) remained an issue of justice with an entirely separate and more downplayed discourse. Far from reducing or eliminating crime, prisons produced a tolerable and depoliticized criminal underclass of clear and distinct social enemies whose presence would for the most part secure that the criminality of the dominant classes, the exploitation of labor, for instance, would go unpunished by its not being perceived as criminal. Meanwhile, although political crimes against property-owners, or protest crimes were not uncommon, criminality qua delinquency would outshine political crimes. In short, crime would remain a fundamentally apolitical practice, or one that would appear as if it pertained to politics only as a social ill to be prevented, without strategic political value.

What Deleuze calls the emergence of the time-image, among other things, represents, in the work of a small number of auteurs, cinema's coming to grips with its own complicity with and a resistance to that conspiratorial production of the normal and abnormal individuals subjected to the ubiquitous plot of the cooperation of state control and capital. In films that discover that the actual is produced by the virtual, that lived subjectivity is produced by institutions, in these films that reflect upon the filmic production of subjectivity, there emerges a new power to think critically. Both filmmaker and viewer might reevaluate how they might play a role in the creation of a new ethic no

longer inhibited by the deadening morality produced and recuperated by the desiring machine of capital. But Spielberg's film represents a venture into critical reflexivity only to positively reinstate and revalorize the cinematic and judicial apparatuses as they have been and continue to be, confining the film's critique to a vague caution about how visual technologies and disciplinary systems might intervene in a potential future. But this future is secretly already past and the connections to the present world outside are cut off by the seemingly just resolution of the film, in contradistinction to the typical noir film ending.

Spielberg also mentions in *Minority Report's* press dossier that he was attracted to the Phillip K. Dick story on which the film is based because of its struggle with issues of predetermination and fate. Spielberg's film and Dick's story get lost in the question of what is possible for the individual against the givens of fate and lose sight of other questions immanent to that one, questions such as: what different viewpoints can one take on the history of individuality in general? How have our perceptions of what an individual and privacy are, themselves been shaped by history and institutions? How can we conceive of our individuality differently in relation to society? But Dick's stories always seem to hinge on the repeated schizoid trauma of discovering that there is no *sui generis* individual, no individual without social structures which give form and articulation to desires. On the other hand, Spielberg's film seems to discover that in the end there is a self given individuality, that in fact we just need to properly defend our preexisting individuality from encroachments on privacy that "go too far." Dick's story ends with Anderton murdering his predicted victim with the explicit intent of justifying Precrime, sacrificing himself, like the general in Kafka's "In the Penal Colony" to a machine that is fundamentally and obviously flawed but that he has learned to love in spite of the suicidal implications of living out that love. The adaptation for the film by Scott Frank leaves intact the actual system of judgment and incarceration out of which the fictional Precrime has been built into a transfigured version of our own decaying justice system. The final abandonment of Precrime is carried out, it is vaguely explained, because of a confused mix of the essential falsity of Precrime's images (although this ability for Precrime to be wrong is what made possible the prevention of murder in Washington since Precrime's founding), the inhuman treatment of the precognitives, and the scandal of Burgess's two murders and his suicide. The consideration of Precrime's potential as a radical cinema within the film, an image-machine with the possibility to ethically alter the future gets short-shrift in favor of discussions of the implications of a predicted destiny within practical life. The film encourages us to think practically about an impractical fantasy as opposed to thinking imaginatively or fantastically about the practical.

From Disciplinary Societies to Societies of Control (and Back Again?)

Minority Report not only presents the problems of the past as the future and the failed solutions to the problems of the past as the unavoidable solutions to the problem of crime in the present and future, it also mitigates the urgency of the burgeoning system of control in the present, one distinct from the disciplinary institutions of the past whose general premises of austere confinement *Minority Report* implicitly endorses. Foucault

and to a more developed extent Deleuze believed that the institutions of modernity (factories, schools, prisons, hospitals, and barracks) were in fact in a state of obsolescence throughout the twentieth century. The time of the ideal of centralized surveillance, though its effects are still felt, is long past. This is obvious in comparing the state of any present day prison or school with the ideals of Jeremy Bentham's science of incarceration or even reports of 19th century incarnations of disciplinary institutions. What Deleuze, following from Foucault, William S. Burroughs, and Paul Virilio, dubbed "the societies of control," are replacing the disciplinary societies, as disciplinary surveillance and governmentality replaced societies captivated by the spectacles of public punishments and ruled under the sovereignty of despots. Though the old institutions of incarceration and discipline may survive in the control society in a transformed or degraded form, Deleuze lays out some of the fundamental discontinuities in the transitions from sovereign societies to disciplinary societies, and from disciplinary societies to control societies on the level of the machines made by these societies. The machinic shift is from simple machines, to complex and powerful energy-intensive machines, to third order machines, like computers and electronics, that are low-power, in constant modulation and rely earlier machines while controlling them,

It's easy to set up a correspondence between any society and some kind of machine, which isn't to say that their machines determine different kinds of society but that they express the social forms capable of producing them and making use of them. The old sovereign societies worked with simple machines, levers, pulleys, clocks; but recent disciplinary societies were equipped with thermodynamic machines presenting the passive danger of entropy and the active danger of sabotage; control societies function with a third generation of machines, with information and technology and computers, where the passive danger is noise and the active, piracy and viral contamination. This technological development is more deeply rooted in a mutation of capitalism (Deleuze, *Negotiations* 181).

Minority Report, as a late cyber-noir in a long tradition, puts these third generation machines at center stage. Also, Deleuze describes this mutation in capitalism as a shift from stricter, often government and police based forms of confinement and discipline of the social body to more flexible forms of control based in the corporation,

The mutation has been widely recognized and can be summarized as follows: nineteenth-century capitalism was concentrative, directed toward production, and proprietorial. Thus it made the factory into a site of confinement... But capitalism in its present form is no longer directed toward production, which is often transferred to remote parts of the Third World, even in the case of complex operations like textile plants, steelworks, and oil refineries. Its directed toward metaproduction... It's a capitalism no longer directed toward production but toward products, that is, toward sales or markets... Family, school, army, and factory are no longer so many analogous but different sites converging in an owner, whether the state or some private power, but transmutable or transformable coded configurations of a single business where the only people left are administrators (Deleuze, *Negotiations* 182).

Minority Report also figures the place of visual technologies in these societies of control. The new corporate methods of control are figured in *Minority Report* in the ubiquitous advertising images and retinal scans. Marketing becomes the central aspect of social power in the societies of control:

The sales department becomes a business center or "soul." We're told businesses have souls, which is surely the most terrifying news in the world. Marketing is now the instrument of social control and

produces the arrogant breed who are our masters... A man is no longer a man confined but a man in debt. (Deleuze, *Negotiations* 181)

The cooperation of third generation machines with marketing should be obvious at this point in the development of the internet. The retinal scans in *Minority Report* are a kind of strange admixture of surveillance and advertising spectacle like the kind of consumer tracking practiced by internet vendors. Perhaps, it is the internet taken out into the actual streets rather than in merely virtual space. But here the surveillance aspect is the far more unnerving one, or it outdoes the banality of advertising spectacle in general. Perhaps, there is cautionary lesson taught by the retinal scans and the right of Precrime to move to early on merely suspected future criminals. The consumer's ability to consume discretely must be protected, punishment after the crime and not before. More powerfully, Anderton's "toys" still seem very cool, and would be cool as long as the aspect of surveillance could be prevented from getting out of hand. But again, surveillance is an old social problem. The mania it produces is well known, and for this reason the disciplinary institutions have fallen into obsolescence. They have lost their effectiveness and their time is past. But since it is known, it is easy to use the fear of surveillance to induce paranoia in a thriller. It would clearly be more difficult to make the spectacle of marketing appear so overtly with all its fearful effects in a Hollywood thriller, because those effects do not yet appear with the historical givenness of surveillance. *Requiem for a Dream* (2001) seems to be one film that might have tried and failed to do so.

Conclusion

The breakdown of the justice system in *Minority Report* mirrors our own present and past as it incites Anderton into the confusion and self-dissolution that leads to the trappings of murder –accidental or intentional- but in such a way that the viewer feels comfortably admonished about our own history and present as it appears in the form of a mere future possibility. The film's final scenes, featuring Anderton's reunited family, alone in their private home, and the released precognitives, safely isolated from society, indicate that it is precisely the privatized, normalized subjectivity not only that we desire most but which is all that is conceivable. As such, the epilogue tacitly condones the system of surveillance and incarceration that the film's earlier, more philosophical considerations on the level of the image's effects on the future and that the images of the retinal scans throughout had thrown into question even offering it as the final solution to the contemporary problem of the delirium of marketing, whose corresponding techno-delirium still seems too good to resist.

It is also worth noting that the exacerbation of environmental decline in the past, present, and future, or the possibility of ecological disaster so prevalent in other future sci-fi films (especially *Blade Runner*) is another point on which Spielberg's think-tank dreaming up *Minority Report* seems to have remained conspicuously silent. Of course, the other point that *Minority Report*'s future ignores and that Deleuze doesn't fail to stress about what has stayed the same in spite of all of the transformations denoted by the control society is the ugly presence and acceleration of global poverty plaguing capital at its origins:

One thing, it's true hasn't changed –capitalism still keeps three quarters of humanity in extreme poverty, too poor to have debts and too numerous to be confined: control will have to deal not only with vanishing frontiers, but with mushrooming shantytowns and ghettos (Deleuze, *Negotiations* 181).

In the repackaging of Dick's Schizoid novel for a Spielberg thriller with a family values aesthetic trumping the dismal ending typical of other "film noir", the film charts the cooptation or capture of the concerns of a time-image cinema. The production of films (primarily during the new wave) that exhausted possibilities to interact with and challenge subjectivities in the outside world and to call into question the existing system of order (at least among those who saw the films) is replaced with a film that glorifies technologies that are interactive (at least for those who can afford the technology) but interactive specifically within a plane of action contained according to preexisting structures of normalization. *Minority Report* resists the existing order of control only in so far as it surreptitiously waxes nostalgic for phantasms of individuality produced by the forms of surveillance that it posits as a danger whose effects we might have to fear in the future. The question that *Minority Report*, for all its twists and turns, displacements and distortions, most resolutely resists asking but that perhaps we can make films like this ask is the question of artistic resistance to the societies of control:

Can one already glimpse the outlines of future forms of resistance, capable of standing up to marketing's blandishments? Many young people today have a strange craving to be "motivated," they're always asking for special courses and continuing education; it's their job to discover whose ends these serve, just as older people discovered, with considerable difficulty, who was benefiting from the disciplines. (Deleuze, *Negotiations* 182)

On the one hand, comparing the social analyses of French post-structuralists to the obviously fantastic constructions in a Spielberg thriller may seem like an exercise in futility. But the point here is not just to show that the Spielberg movie is wrong or unrealistic. Rather, it is important to see how there are intersections between the world of radical thought and media products as mainstream as a Spielberg film without the two being identical – one a liberating line of flight and the other a reterritorialized flight into entertainment's "pure escape," as Spielberg describes his own work. This means that there are certain points whereon radical thought might make interventions in perfecting the understanding of issues that have only been poorly imagined. Thinking a film through and against philosophy can exercise thought about how to map a transition or transvaluation from the kind of paralyzing fantasies that typically hold audience's attention to healthier ones, or to inspire the creation of new images made available to consciousness by transforming the old.

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