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Practical Uses and the Unconcealment of Worldly Investment

A Heideggerian Inspired Investigation into the Embodied Uses of Mobile Media Technologies

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To undergo an experience with something – be it a thing, a person, or a god – means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us. When we talk of undergoing an experience, we mean specifically that the experience is not of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it. It is this something itself that comes about, comes to pass, happens. (Heidegger, 1971 [1959], p. 57)

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> The body (well) disposed towards the world is…oriented towards the world and what immediately presents itself there to be seen, felt and expected: it is capable of mastering it by providing an adequate response, having a hold on it, using it as an instrument that is well in hand. (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 142)

Introduction

This paper offers a Heideggerian-inspired analysis of mobile media technologies as examples of ready to hand[1] information technologies available for practical utilisation. I am specifically interested in how information technologies, and especially tablets and similar instruments, offer the unconcealment of a person's everyday ontological state as an invested entity with multiple intermeshed environments.[2] When using such terminology, I wish to denote not only the corporeal world with which one is in a mode of continuous interaction, but also immaterial domains available through engagement with mobile applications. Like Moores, in addition to others, I am skeptical about "grand claims about the disembodied character of online media use" (Moores, 2012, p. 52) and argue that exploring a person's practical engagement with these technologies leads to, in Heideggerian terms, the opening up or unconcealment of immaterial worlds that permeate the corporeal and reveals ways that users are involved in an ongoing series of dialectical, negotiated practices.

These interests are inspired by Moores' considerations for "the primacy of movement" (Moores, 2012, p. 7-10) with regards to media usage as well as thorough investigations into Martin Heidegger's later writings, principally *Building Dwelling Thinking* (1977 [1954]), *The Question Concerning Technology* (1977 [1954]) and *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking* (1972 [1969]). In these texts, Heidegger demonstrates a turn of sorts, although

this is a contested distinction (Wrathall, 2011, p. 4), in that the emphasis is no longer on Dasein;[3] rather, the concepts of dwelling, technology and *alētheia* (truth conceived as unconcealment) become consistent fixtures throughout his arguments. Heidegger expresses concern that, in modern society, "we attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building. The latter, building, has the former, dwelling, as its goal" (Heidegger, 1977a [1954], p. 323). This dilemma arises, principally, because of humanity's increasing tendency to view dwelling and building processes with technological rationales. Objects in the world are, through the lens of enframing, seen as a mere usable resource rather than through a mode that uncovers their existential importance (ibid, p. 302), which, as explained by Mark Wrathall, "would consist in some practice or object or person having an importance for our self-realisation. That is, the object or person or practice is something without which we would cease to be who we are" (Wrathall, 2011, p. 200). In order to confront this detrimental pervasiveness of the technological world, a world where nothing is capable of existential importance, Heidegger suggests that people must recognise that "we do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell, that is, we are *dwellers*" (Heidegger, 1977a [1954], p. 326, author's emphasis).

Drawing from Heidegger's concerns, this paper will attempt to address two principal queries. First, what does it mean to dwell and, second, relying on an analysis of ethnographic fieldwork conducted at the University of Sunderland, how can information technologies, particularly mobile media tablets, fit into a conceptual framework attentive to dwelling where technology can act as a saving power rather than source of enframing? Through this inquiry, I hope to demonstrate that, as Seamon and Mugerauer suggest, "dwelling incorporates environments … but extends beyond

them, signifying our inescapable immersion in the present world as well as the possibility of reaching beyond new places, experiences, and ideas'' (Seamon and Mugerauer, 1985, p. 8). This paper is not concerned with exploring how these technologies contribute to Heidegger's concerns of enframing, a framework where technologies are predicated on challenging and manipulating the natural essence of things (Heidegger, 1977b [1954], p. 298), but rather with how a person's practical use of these technologies offers indications of how we fundamentally are as human beings.

The piece commences with a commentary on Heidegger's conception of dwelling and how, as dwellers, we seek to orient our self to the world to find feelings of at-homeness. In this piece, at-homeness is defined not necessarily as an achievement, but as an ongoing process where a person becomes absorbed into the world. For this section, I draw upon a diverse number of theoretical positions to provide an overview of what I consider to be both problematic and useful understandings of dwelling and its relationship to at-homeness. For this piece, dwelling means to reside with the world, to live in a way that is attentive to how our involvement with things allows an opening up, a revealing. Dwelling is not about finding 'place' and being content with it; rather dwelling is about the never ending, improvisational and orientational way we move through the world – this quest is what permits things to disclose themselves. Within the frame of this critical overview, the remaining analysis draws on ethnographic fieldwork to engage with the questions raised. I will focus on what I consider to be the three core dwelling practices: *wayfaring*, *hybridity*, and *mastery*. The three behaviors are explicitly linked and, in praxis, intertwined together. The goal is to employ an amalgamative approach to dwelling to demonstrate that people's relationships with mobile media technologies are ultimately grounded in corporeality and not necessarily motivated by some pre-

determined goal, but rather by something that is perpetually ongoing where new worlds and new possibilities can emerge.

Dwelling: A Brief Exploration

In Building Dwelling Thinking, Heidegger draws inspiration from the poetry of Hölderlin and Rilke to argue that it is a grave mistake to classify dwelling as a mere constructed entity or as an activity that man performs alongside a variety of others (Heidegger, 1977a [1954], p. 325). To conceive of dwelling in these terms neglects the entire essence of how humanity fundamentally dwells with an open and available world where the disclosure of new worlds is possible. For Heidegger, dwelling ought to be viewed through the lens of poetic thinking, a mode of approaching the world that is attentive to how a person's collective movements through and with the spatio-temporal environment results in an ongoing orientational development that permits the revealing of essences and possible worlds suitable for inhabitation. David Seamon suggests that, for Heidegger, "dwelling…is more than attractive buildings or surroundings, or needs defined by physical criteria – amount of floor space, lighting or whatever. Rather, dwelling involves less tangible qualities and processes – caring for the place where one lives, feeling at home in and a part of that place" (Seamon, 1979, p. 93). Anne Buttimer provides further commentary, arguing that dwelling "means to live in a manner which is attuned to the rhythms of nature, to see one's ecological and social milieu" (Buttimer, 1976, p. 277). With this statement, Buttimer alludes to Heidegger's concerns about authentic modes of dwelling. In *Building Dwelling Thinking,* Heidegger refers to humanity's adoption of technological rationales and the need to manipulate environments as a driver for its increasing sense of homelessness and inauthentic state. He posits that as an authentic dweller, a person's investment *with* worlds is geared towards organically building and nurturing at-homeness so the disclosure of being is

possible (Heidegger, 1977a [1954], p. 329-339). Please note the use of the term *with*. The rationale for employing 'with' rather than 'in' is because such terminology endorses the complex dialectic that is the process through which people make places of existence mesh together.

For this phenomenon to occur, a person must recognise that practices encourage absorption into the world, and such absorption fosters a sense of at-homeness and identification, or extent of attachment, that a person has for a place. Relph refers to this phenomenon as existential insideness (Relph, 1976), a concept that conveys how a person's identification with a place is understood in relation to the stability that it provides and yet, is taken-for-granted despite this genuine emotional attachment. Existential insideness is contrasted with outsideness, a mode of experience where people feel separated or alienated from a place. Seamon and Sowers suggest that:

> The crucial phenomenological point is that outsideness and insideness constitute a fundamental dialect in human life and that, through varying combinations and intensities of outsideness and insideness, different places take on different identities for different individuals and groups, and human experience takes on different qualities of feeling, ambience, and action (Seamon and Sowers, 2008, p. 45).

Relph's use of Heidegger's philosophy provides a useful framework for exploring how people relate to particular places; however, this proposition carries a distinct dualism in that a sense of place is described in terms of binary oppositions and an affixation to geographic locales. Additionally, the argument fails to explore the intimate way with which a person is

perpetually engaging with the practice of at-homeness. Relph's experiential perspective is similar to arguments proposed by Yi-Fu Tuan, another cultural geographer who proposes that "when space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place" (Tuan, 1977, p. 73). An issue with this experiential perspective is that place is conceived as something with an achievable completion. Rather than consider the experiential perspective of space becoming place, I prefer arguments proposed by the anthropologist, Tim Ingold. *In Being Alive* (2011), Ingold reformulates the notion of place into multiple, intertwined paths. A person's perceptual understanding is always, to borrow from Deleuze and Guattari, in a state of constant becoming and is never in a fully formed state; as such, the finiteness and concreteness associated with space gradually transforming into place, in my estimation, is problematic.

Ingold recommends the concept of wayfaring, a term he defines as "a skilled performance in which the traveller, whose powers of perception and action, have been fine tuned through previous experience, 'feels his way' towards his goal, continually adjusting his movements in response to an ongoing perceptual monitoring of his surroundings" (Ingold, 2011, p. 220). Wayfaring thus emphasises not only a person's investment with the world, but also a person's ongoing mobility; Ingold posits that "the wayfarer is continually on the move. More strictly, he is his movement" (Ingold, 2011, p. 150). This is a proclamation that I am willing to grant sympathy; it is beneficial to consider the self as a constant traveller simultaneously inhabiting numerous, intersecting environments because, as Ingold insightfully suggests, "lives are led not inside places, but through, around, to and from them, from and to places elsewhere" (Ingold, 2000, p. 229). Differing from Tuan and Relph, Ingold thus usefully suggests that life is not necessarily place-bound, but place-binding; Ingold states that life "unfolds not in places but along paths"

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(Ingold, 2011, p. 148). As wayfarers, people are in a constant mode of mobility, always in motion along a path. However, it is crucial to remember that this path is not necessarily following a strict, linear development; rather, wayfaring occurs within a meshwork-like structure of fluid space. A path is always a path to somewhere else, an open, incomplete meshwork of becoming with interconnecting links. In the end, Ingold suggests that "wayfaring is our most fundamental mode of being-in-the-world" (ibid, p. 152).

By using the Ingold's notion of wayfaring, further emphasis is placed on a person's bodily mobility and phenomenological intentionality.[4] Including the body is imperative because, as the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty posits, "our insertion into the world is through the body with its motor and perceptual acts" (Moran, 2000, p. 403). Through the practice of wayfaring, we interact with objects in the world and thus a rapport is built through practical engagement, which, in this author's opinion, is an equally foundational component for establishing the feeling of at-homeness. As Mark Wrathall states:

> Although the world is meaningful or intelligible to me when I grasp the practical and equipmental contexts that embed all the things that populate the world, nothing in the world matters to me on the basis of this intelligibility alone. It is only when I am engaged in activities myself that any particular object comes to hold any special significance for me. As a result, in a world where I am not active, where I have no purposes or goals, where I am drawn out into no involvements, no thing or person could matter to me. Everything would be spread out before me in an undifferentiated (albeit meaningful) irrelevance (Wrathall, 2011, p. 200).

The Tablet Book

An example of Wrathall's proclamation concerning involvement becomes evident when asked to describe a tablet. Initially, I will take the present-at-hand object and, because it is occurrent to me, perhaps describe it in terms of its ontic properties - weight, colour, texture and so on. However, it is only when I actually use the tablet that I come to know not only what the tablet truly is, but also the investment I share with it. At the moment of operation, I merge with the tablet and the definitive line that distinguishes flesh and material, at least perceptually, begins to blur. Thus, over time, it becomes a part of my bodily habitus (see Bourdieu, 2000, p. 128-163). For instance, in Merleau-Ponty's oft-cited example of the blind man's cane, the stick "has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002 [1962], p. 165). Taylor Carman, summarising Merleau-Ponty's philosophy, writes:

> The body is a primitive constituent of perceptual awareness as such, which in turn forms the permanent background of intentionality at large. The intentional constitution of the body is not the product of a cognitive process whose steps we might trace back to the founding acts of a pure I. Rather, the body in its perceptual capacity just is the I in its most primordial aspect. For Merleau-Ponty, then, strictly speaking, we do not have bodies, rather we are our body, which is to say, we are in the world through our body, and insofar as we perceive the world with our body (Carman, 1999, p. 224).

With this summation, Carman highlights Merleau-Ponty's proposition that a person's perceptual awareness is not necessarily wrapped up in either the isolated mind or the mere physical body; such a distinction would impose

disengagement and a problematic Cartesian dualism. Rather, the body and the mind must be considered as an inseparable tangled whole. For Merleau-Ponty, it is not so much a consciousness, but a body that embraces and takes investment with the world and it is this integral investment with the world, and the things that populate it, that reveals a person's basic hybrid nature. Nigel Thrift, the chief architect of cultural geography's non-representational turn, warns that is unwise to assume that the make-up of the human body stops simply with a person's flesh; he suggests that "the human body is what it is because of its unparalleled ability to co-evolve with things, taking them in and adding them to different parts of the biological body to produce something which, if we could see it, would resemble a constantly evolving distribution of different hybrids with different reaches" (Thrift, 2007, p. 10).

Because we are collectively wayfarers and hybrid beings, we also, through the repeated use of objects, become masters. Mastery is a sort of embodied confidence that shows itself when practically handling an object; "everyday equipment is primarily understood in the skillful mastery of its proper use – what we might call a 'hands' on intelligibility" (Haugeland, 2000, p. 49). Like our unification with objects, in addition to our state as wayfarers, a person's mastery of an object is also often pre-reflective. With mastery of a common object, our ability to use it in its practical sense requires not cognitive thought, but an embodied sensibility. For Heidegger, mastery is possible because "equipment is essentially something-in-order-to … equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability" (Heidegger, 1927 [1962], p. 97). Equipment, in this sense, is seen as not simply a noun, but a verb. This 'in-order-to', as Heidegger explains, is correlated with 'towards-which' (ibid, p. 99), in the sense that "the work which we chiefly encounter in our

concernful dealings – the work that is to be found when one is 'at work' on something – has a usability which belongs to it essentially; in this usability it lets us encounter already the 'towards-which' for which it is usable'' (ibid). However, Dreyfus argues that ''it is a mistake to think of the toward-which as the goal of the activity … activity can be *purposive* without the actor having in mind a *purpose*'' (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 92). I find this distinction important for inclusion because of how it links with wayfaring. While Ingold does explicitly state that wayfarers feel their way towards their goal, my interpretation of his usage of goal here is not defined as a milestone or accomplishment, but rather as a flexible moving forward in the sense that further disclosures are possible. This links to Heidegger's notion of horizon, conceived ''as not that at which something stops … but that from which something begins *its essentially unfolding*'' (Heidegger, 1977a [1954], p. 332). Finally it is also imperative to recognise that mastering equipment also requires a pre-reflective understanding of where this equipment fits into what Heidegger refers to as its ''referential totality'' (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 92). By this he means ''equipment is encountered always with an equipmental contexture. Each single piece of equipment carries this contexture along with it, and it is this equipment only with regard to that contexture'' (Heidegger, 1988 [1975] p. 292). In short, we comprehend and master equipment based on how it fits into an equipmental nexus.

In the end, dwelling is a form of being-in-the-world with a focus on inhabitation *and* absorption. Dreyfus argues that ''when we inhabit something, it is no longer an object for us but becomes part of us and pervades our relation to objects in the world … dwelling is Dasein's basic way of being-in-the-world'' (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 45). In this section I have tried to show that a dwelling perspective is attentive to a human being's invested involvement with the world. Dwelling is not necessarily about finding 'place'

Figure 1: 'triad of wayfaring, hybridity and mastering

Wayfaring

Dwelling

Bodily
Hybridty

Equipmental
mastery
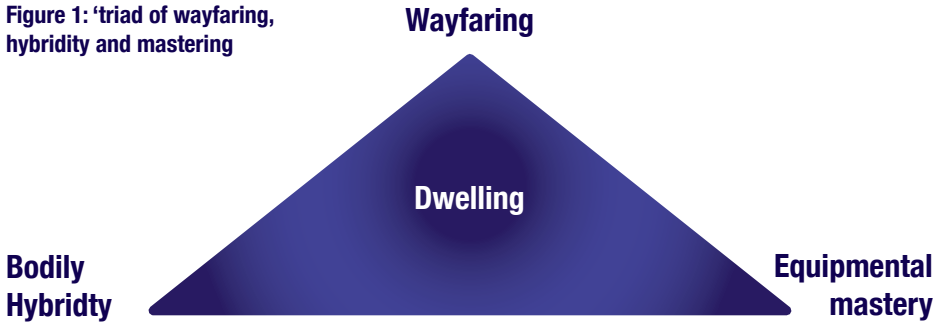
and being satisfied with it, but rather the ongoing, never ending process that permits a moving forward, an opening up. Furthermore, being-in-the-world is not meant to imply that we are simply in the world spatially, in that we are 'in' space, but rather in the primordial sense in that 'in' is to reside with, to dwell with (ibid, p. 42). We reside with the world and are involved with it; this involvement with the world is made clear through the triad of wayfaring, hybridity, and mastering (see Figure 1). I have chosen to illustrate this phenomenon with a triad because, drawing from Seamon, a triad "suggests a working relationship among the parts – as in a chord triad of music" (Seamon, 1979, p. 131).

This way of being-in-the-world suggests a form of life that many fear is undermined by technocratic rationality. At this point I wish to return to Heidegger's theorisation of technology and the distinctions he makes between enframing and unfolding, *technē* and *poiēsis.* Heidegger's writings on technology might be taken to suggest that humans are losing sight of these kinds of ways of being-in-the-world, in part due to the encroachment of technocratic rationality. However, it should be remembered that Heidegger's writing explores the question concerning technology, rather

than simply condemning it; this is made evident when he writes "the question concerning technology is the constellation in which revealing and concealing, in which the coming to presence of truth comes to pass" (Heidegger, 1977b [1954], p. 315). In his seminal essay, Heidegger's etymological analysis of *technē* leads him to the Greek sense of the word, which he claims that, until Plato, was linked to the word *epistēmē*, and that both words are terms for knowing in the widest sense (ibid, p. 294). For Heidegger, this knowing provides an essential opening up, a bringing-forth (*poiēsis*), or something out of concealment into unconcealment. Heidegger proposes that:

> *Technē* is a mode of *alētheuein.* It reveals whatever does not bring itself forth and does not yet lie here before us, whatever can look and turn out now one way and now another … thus what is decisive in *technē* does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in the revealing mentioned before. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that *technē* is a bringing forth (ibid, p. 295).

This understanding of *technē*, for Heidegger, has gradually disappeared from the world. From Heidegger's perspective, modern technologies, both industrial and informational, produce unforeseen and irreparable dangers to humanity's ability to grapple with itself and its environment essentially. This he coins as enframing. When occurring within the confines of an enframed state, man "pursues nature as an area of his own conceiving, he has already been claimed by a way of revealing that challenges to him to approach nature as an object of research, until even the object disappears in the objectlessness of standing-reserve" (ibid, p. 300). This mindset invariably leads to a loss of what gives humanity its unique quality, the sense of what

it means to be human and the ability to recognise essential unconcealment (*alētheia*). Cybernetics, in particular, is the ultimate technological obliteration of being in that all things, including human beings, are there to be nothing but a part of the standing reserve, resources "switched about ever anew" (ibid, p. 298). Despite this clear dystopian vision, in the end, it is crucial to remember that he suggested "the closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become" (ibid, p. 317). With this statement in mind, I will use mobile media technologies to demonstrate the revealing power of technology in the sense of poïēsis; such is the focus of my next section.

Synthesising Dwelling and Mobile Media Technologies

If we grant Heidegger's concerns towards the technological epoch sympathy, particularly those of cybernetics, then how can mobile media technologies be explored within a dwelling perspective? Heidegger's suggestion was, according to Hubert Dreyfus, that people "must learn to appreciate marginal practices … the saving power of insignificant things" (Dreyfus, 2002, p. 171). Based on ethnographic research, it is my contention that a person's engrossment with mobile media technologies and immersion into the worlds that they permit encourage the unconcealment of a person's triad of involvement (in the sense of being a wayfarer, hybrid-entity, and eventually, master). However, a unique quality about these technologies, in particular, is that they not only reveal the triad's presence in the corporeal, but also in immaterial arenas. In order to explicate this, drawing from Dreyfus, a person must be attentive to the nature of practice and how, as wayfarers that forge hybrid relationships with and mastery of encountered objects in the world, we build and nurture intermeshed environments, both material and immaterial. My case study comprised of interviews with ten first year university students at the University of Sunderland experiencing

the transition from secondary education to university during the fall 2013 semester. The aim of my interviewees was to explore their own use of these technologies to see how they might, in Heideggerian terms, permit an opening up, a revealing of their position as dwellers. As Heidegger states, beings can be as beings only if they stand out within what is lighted in this lighting. Only this lighting grants and guarantees us as humans a passage to those beings that we ourselves are not, and access to being that we ourselves are'' (Heidegger, 1977c [1960], p. 175).

Figure 2: my Nexus 7 Android tablet

Before turning to my informants, I wish to first turn to myself. Please take note of the tablet's layout (see Figure 2).

When I grip the tablet, my hands are aware of the exact pressure to apply, as the tablet is, of course, a fragile entity. The precise movements to open the tablet are those that have become habitual due to repeated practice. Because my left-hand is the dominant one, it is the hand which first takes hold of the instrument. My right hand then gently flips the protective case

open and, mimicking a sort of rhythmic dance, replaces the left-hand as the device's support base. Then, in a quick instance, the point finger of the right hand presses the power button. Immediately following the device's activation, the left-hand, without hesitation, unlocks the device by entering the designated password. Suddenly, all the applications on the home screen are revealed. Depending on the context (what application is needed), the left-hand knowingly moves towards the direction of the application and opens it via a routinely employed tender tap. This application, and all its features, becomes unconcealed as a world of its own with its own unique properties and being. With this example, I exhibit astoundingly precise dexterities with my fingers as I wayfare through this digital screen. With what Merleau-Ponty coins as "knowledge in the hands, which is forthcoming only when bodily effort is made and cannot be formulated in detachment from that effort" (Merleau-Ponty, 2002 [1962], p. 166), I scroll through Internet pages and engage with the tapping and double tapping of icons and links, often whilst simultaneously using fingers to zoom in and out in an effort to achieve greater detail. The practice of scrolling, in particular, is vital when deploying a Kindle or e-reader, as the interface is designed in such a way that demands the frequently deployment of such a skill. The distinction between the utilised physical object and myself simply disappears into a current of continuous active motion.

One interviewee described how when she first purchased the tablet as a replacement for a defunct laptop, her ability to operate it could be considered clumsy at best, so much that during this initial stage, she found herself somewhat indifferent towards exploring its many functions. The tablet's lack of a conventional keyboard and overall cumbersome nature in that it can neither slide into a coat pocket nor be conveniently operated with one hand were two reasons for this general disinterest. However, after

playing with the device, as a wayfarer she began to adopt ways of using it that were considered comfortable and, eventually, absorbed into other patterns of life activity. For instance, when using the tablet to simultaneously watch a downloaded television programme and chat with friends via Facebook Messenger, the interviewee observed that a simple bodily adjustment was required to perform both tasks. Rather than place the device on the lap as one would do with a notebook computer or hold it with one hand like a mobile phone, the tablet, in this instance, required her to embrace a laying position on the bed or sofa so that the tablet could rest diagonally against either the bed headboard or the arm of the sofa. Additionally, a pillow was required to prop up her upper body. In this position, both the hands and eyes are situated so she can collectively watch the desired programme and converse with friends through the messenger application. Additionally, the nature of the tasks, as well as the intensity required to perform them, corresponds with the body's at-ease position. Other modes of operation required distinct bodily maneuvers as well. To play games necessitating quick on-the-fly adjustments, a traditional sitting position with one hand completely under the tablet as a support base and the other free to tap the screen was optimal. When playing games, my interviewee noticed that she prefers to sit with her legs folded and upper body somewhat hunched over in the direction of the tablet as though the entirety of her body's energy and concentration is fully directed towards accomplishing this task. Despite whatever context, she had, through repeated practice, mastered the instrument. However, after a while she did admit that it would not be long until she purchased a detached keyboard, as writing essays through a touch screen proved to be a very difficult endeavor!

In our conversations, she explained that as her usage of the tablet permitted its integration into her life, she had come to forge an affective

relationship with it, now designating the technology as an inseparable part of her perceived self. Nevertheless, despite this attachment to the device, when asked to explain the necessary steps to unlock the device's Instagram application and upload a photo via memory, she displayed great difficulty identifying the intricacies of a procedure that she so regularly completed without contemplation. When the device was returned, however, the task was performed effortlessly, accomplished in matter of seconds. When we discussed why this was possible, the consensus was that the necessarily bodily competence to perform the required task automatically was not driven only by mastery and habit, but also investment. She exhibits qualities of what David Seamon refers to as a feeling-subject, an experiential stratum associated with attachment that is *"a matrix of emotional intentionalities within the person which extend outward in varying intensities to the centers, places, and spaces of a person's everyday geographical world"* (Seamon, 1979, p. 76, author's emphasis). A feeling-subject is driven by attraction and closeness to specific things encountered in the world; the person becomes drawn to the object and their bodily performance adjusts in ways to fulfill that desire. This interviewee, as someone who is invested, or, a feeling-subject, demonstrates that her ability to perform a task prior to reflective thought is knitted with affectual attachment she shares with the specific path-like movements that are only performable *when this particular piece of technology is present*. If given a different piece of technology with similar functions, she would most likely be able to decipher how to perform the same task; however, it may take a series of trial and error negotiations before she can confidently do so. This example implies that bodily-performed tasks are far more than tactile pleasures or mechanical habitual movements, but rather actions of investment where a person receives embodied satisfactory feelings through a perceived mergence, defined by David Seamon as "a break in the boundary between person and world (ibid, p. 101).

The Tablet Book

Thus far I have attempted to demonstrate how wayfaring, as a part of dwelling, is a motivation-infused set of path-like movements and haptic sensibilities that fosters hybridisation between a person and utilised piece of technology. However this is not the only form of fusion that occurs. When synthesised with the material tablet, the interviewees also came to feel a mergence between the physical self and arenas of immateriality, a synthesis that impacted their abilities, intentions, direction, and emotions. These immaterial worlds, such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, were not considered isolated arenas in the cloud, but worlds that permeated the membrane-like physical present in that their involvement initiated a trigger of bodily felt meanings and inspirations.

Although stated in a variety of terms, the interviewees proposed that, when merging with these environments, they began to recognise their position as 'perpetual builders' in the sense that they were always constructing. These acts of construction were not driven by an achievable concrete conclusion, but as a mode of being where a person invests and reinvests in the things with which they care about. Emma, from Northern Ireland, recognised how she often 'builds' through her iPad. Primarily her building practices consist of constituting the self and its relationship with online communities. During television broadcasts of the programs *Sherlock* and *Supernatural*, Emma immediately takes her iPad and effortlessly uses her hands and fingers to unlock Instagram and Twitter with intent to engage the show's followers in dialogue. As she performs the embodied tasks and the immaterial worlds open up to her, she specified that a variety of emotions materialise through her body, whether through a miniscule increase in temperature, quivering movements, or a simple smile. This sort of reaction suggests that it is not simply the material technology that is the driver of her motivation, but

the embodied foresight of what it allows her to do and where it allows her to go (see Urry, 2007, p. 47 for an overview of imaginative, virtual and commutative travel). These are not the only way that her emotions manifested through the body. For example, unexpected events that occur on the shows, viewed through the television (not the iPad), often inspire an emotionally charged bodily reaction that manifests itself through bodily interaction with the tablet and the available immaterial worlds within. Following the occurrence of an event deemed worthy of discussion, Emma grips the iPad and immediately utilises her fingers to comment on Twitter. What was initially felt in the body then made its way through her limbs and into her fingers, to which, upon the gripping of the iPad, initiates the critical mergence. Excitedly, Emma's finger knowingly moves to the proper place on the tablet to type her desired status. This felt bodily reaction, inspired by the show's unexpected turn, has manifested itself as an immaterial presencing in the form posts, responses to others, and the deployment of hashtags (#). As a wayfarer, Emma feels her way towards her desired destination; in Ingold's terms (2007, p. 89), her "inhabitant knowledge" guides her as she goes along. With her embodied actions, she exists dialectically in both the corporeal and immaterial that, especially during the duration of the show, have merged together.

The phenomenon of the material merging with the immaterial can extend beyond a brief moment of encounter. Environments with which we frequently interact converge and, over time, become inseparable. For instance, one interviewee, named Joanne, prefers to inhabit and tie together as many social networking sites as possible to intensify and strengthen her relationships; as such, she frequently monitors her inhabited environments to maintain symmetry between her immaterial and corporeal self. In our conversations, Joanne implied that she feels connected to her immaterial

environments at all times, particularly Facebook and Twitter, because they are a part *of* her. Because she has interacted with these immaterial domains throughout a majority of her adolescent and young adult years, they, and their potential offerings, are now embedded within her. When thinking of world building in terms of intermeshed lines, especially in this scenario, it befits one to make mention of the term connected presence (Licoppe, 2004), a theoretical concept to describe new forms of mobile based sociability. Connected presence involves when "participants multiply encounters and contacts using every kind of mediation and artifacts available to them: relationships become seamless webs of quasi-continuous exchanges" (Licoppe and Smoreda, 2005, p. 321). When a person is a frequent user of communicative applications available through mobile media technologies, that person's relationships with others becomes much more ecological, a web of connectivity and negotiation across multiple arenas, which is fluid and connected to a wider range of mobile charged activities. As such, when accustomed to this form of being-in-the-world, one where connected presence is deeply entrenched within the self, there exists an expectation that unconceals itself when the mobile technology goes missing or destructs. If this scenario occurs, then this person's embodied understanding of self becomes fractured, often resulting in a manifestation of anxious and frustrated feelings that materialise through the lived body. For example, one interviewee, named Glen, had to briefly forfeit his technology due to the temporary cancellation of the data plan. Glen mentioned that he would find himself still reaching for the device, only to be disappointed once reminded that it can no longer carry out the behaviors he had routinely performed. In the end, because of the continued recognition of its inoperability, the device became something regularly left behind. However, this situation can be a beneficial phenomenon because, as Dreyfus notes, "the disturbance makes us aware of the function of equipment and the way it fits into a practical

context … the point of our activity becomes apparent to us" (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 99-100). When the device is absent, this taken-for-granted mode of being-in-the-world becomes unconcealed, raising awareness to the correlation between marginal practices and a state of mergence.

With these select interviewees, I have tried to demonstrate how dwelling can become far more apparent by giving careful consideration to the practical utilisation of mobile media technologies. My intent was to not only counter problematic conceptualisations that disengage online inhabitation, but also to show that technology can act as a saving power by the recognition of Dreyfus' marginal practices. Recognising these practices unconceals a person's ongoing investment with the world. As Merleau-Ponty states, "our relationships with things is not a distant one: each speaks to our body and to the way we live. They are clothed in human characteristics and conversely they dwell within us as emblems of forms of life we either love or hate. Humanity is invested in the things of the world and these are invested in it" (Merleau-Ponty, 2004, p. 49). Drawing from Merleau-Ponty's proclamation, it is through the body that people orient their self to the world, to seek a sense of at-homeness, but (to reiterate) not in terms of its completeness, but rather as a meshwork of continued rhizomatic, embodied involvement.

Conclusions

With a dwelling perspective, an approach in which, as Tim Ingold suggests, "the world continually comes into being around the inhabitant, and its manifold constituents take on significance through their incorporation into a regular patter of life activity" (Ingold, 2000, p. 153), in what way has a person's relationship with these technologies been unconcealed? I have advocated that a person's relationship with tablets, kindles, and e-readers (note: this can

extend to other forms of mobile communicative technologies) encourages the unconcealment of place-binding lines of involvement. Although certainly not exclusive to these technologies, the user's investment in world building, in both the physical and immaterial, becomes knotted through the use of these technologies, revealing our meshwork-like state of inhabitation. It is also my assertion that when using these tools, our attentiveness to marginal practices reveals how we fundamentally care about the world.

In closing, the information presented in this paper merely skims the surface of how mobile media technologies can be explored using a framework attentive to dwelling. This statement is not meant to undermine my work, but is rather as an invitation for others to contribute to the proposed form of thinking and investigation. Also, I recognise the overt optimism contained in the essay and wish to clarify that, despite such enthusiasm, I firmly believe technology can be the danger that Heidegger suggests; many studies that focus on mobile media technologies go forth with this presupposition (see Myerson, 2001, for an example of an intersection between mobile media technologies and Heidegger's dystopian viewpoints). However, these technologies can simultaneously be a saving power for people because of the way the specific "marginal practices" used to operate them offers the unconcealment of worldly involvement. With tablets, and other mobile media technologies, a person has a unique opportunity to grapple with both the seen and unrecognised, as well as the spaces of their intersection. The significance of raising what appears to be at first glance a mundane feature of a person's everyday life is because it is in the everyday that a person confronts the immediate and the most familiar, and yet, the everyday is, simultaneously, mostly ignored or disregarded due to its banality, simplicity, and repetitive, cyclical nature. The everyday is, as Highmore declares, "the landscape closest to us, the world most immediately met" (Highmore,

2002, p. 1), and, as such, this landscape is crucial to understanding our most intimate experiences. The essential core of our being-in-the-world is the way we ongoingly orient ourselves to the world through embodied movement, to presence ourselves and be attentive to the way our marginal practices permit the phenomenon of unconcealment; such is the core of dwelling.

Notes

1. Ready-to-hand implies a *thing* available for practical utilisation understood within a network of other entities. Meaning arises in that the object possesses a practical use, but also because it refers to other objects with which it shares a relation (Heidegger refers to this as referential totality). Ready-to-hand stands theoretically opposite present-at-hand, a problematic way to examine entities for Heidegger because of the way with which entities are suspended and separated from Dasein's fundamental concerns (see Heidegger, 127, p. 102-107).

2. I prefer the word environment rather than 'space' because, as Tim Ingold notes, living organisms inhabit environments, not space; "space is nothing, and because it is nothing it cannot truly be inhabited at all" (Ingold, 2011, p.145). Ingold's proclamations against space draw influence from the logic of inversion. For Ingold, the logic of inversion "turns the pathways along which life is lived into boundaries within which it is enclosed. Life...is reduced to an internal property of things that occupy the world but do not ... inhabit it. A world that is occupied but not inhabited, that is filled with existing things rather than woven from the strands of their coming into-being, is a world of space" (Ingold, 2011, p. 145).

3. *In Being and Time*, Heidegger provides an ontological account of human being as Dasein, or 'being-there' (see Heidegger, 1927, p. 27-28).

4. When I use the term intentionality, I am referring to Heidegger's

interpretation, rather than Husserl's. See Dreyfus (1991, p. 61-69) for an overview of absorbed intentionality (Heidegger) as prior to representational intentionality (Husserl).

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