work on Hanns Eisler) and contemporary reviewers, reprinting passages sometimes over a page long, yet Walther refrains from engaging with these ideas himself. Instead, he merely uses these quotations as evidence that Gilbert's work has been recognized and commented on by others through time. It is unproductive to quote at such length the business correspondence with the publisher Blanvalet over his book projects (and then note with frustration that no paperwork for later publications survives in the archives, an absence which this reader greeted with relief) or to print extensive passages from Gilbert's and his ex-wife's personal letters to and from Hannah Arendt that seem to be motivated primarily by Arendt's fame. And one certainly need not include every bit of trivia one has discovered, down to Gilbert's telephone number in 1927 or the amount of postage on a 1951 postcard to his publisher. The book is, in effect, a documentary montage, a collection of source material that gives a sense of the holdings of the Berlin archives, but it is not a successful narrative or analysis. Presumably in order to give his study a contemporary edge, Walther uses websites and online databases as sources, but footnoting Wikipedia entries for every artist mentioned along the way is pointless, and quoting lyrics from fan-generated internet collections instead of from the authorized, published scores and scripts lacks scholarly credibility. A systematic catalogue of Gilbert's work would have been a useful contribution to scholarship.

Ultimately, the disappointment this dissertation evokes reflects a failure of advising at the dissertation level, for the research and writing clearly have not been adequately mentored and reviewed. Walther admits that his work has grown too long, but the problem is not just that there is too much unknown and unpublished material that deserves documentation, as he asserts, but that the study needs a clear focus and the discipline to present the material carefully and make an argument. At least Christian Walther has called attention to the versatile career and highly creative work of Robert Gilbert, and posed the question of how we are to remember and reconstruct the stories of these forgotten and largely lost lives.

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Heidegger and the Media.
By David Gunkel and Paul A. Taylor. Cambridge; Oxford; Boston: Polity, 2014. xiii + 196 pages + 5 b/w illustrations. $59.95 hardcover, $19.95 paperback.

The present study makes a passionate case for Heidegger's relevance for contemporary media studies, in self-conscious opposition to critics like David Dwan who have dismissed Heidegger's commentary on technology in the contexts of mass communications as "banal" or arcane (43). While Gunkel and Taylor remain sensitive to Heidegger's idiosyncratic language use, they deem it an expedient means to pave the way for alternate interpretations of our relationship to the new media that govern our various life-worlds.

The red thread running through the four chapters of this volume is Heidegger's central claim that "the essence of technology is by no means anything technological" (1; cf. 21, 135, 165). The authors unreservedly accept this dictum and turn it into a license to steer clear of any case studies. "We therefore unapologetically focus on the essential aspects of media that, somewhat paradoxically, are better understood when

one moves away from specific media examples and instead concentrates upon the broader implications for a society pervaded by mediated objects and techniques of objectification" (5). This approach rests on the assumption that there is a basic homology between the pervasiveness of language and the pervasiveness of technology in shaping our experiential encounter with pretty much everything.

Due to their ubiquitous revelatory character, both language and technology emerge as a "meta-medium" (24) from which there is "no escaping" (58). In essence, then, technology is just as unavoidable as language. Thus, the omnipresence of technology raises the question whether humans have any freedom in how they may respond to technology's way of mediating all meaning. The authors hint that "Heidegger does not stop at a mere endorsement of your standard, run-of-the-mill technological determinism" (21). Yet further treatment of the lurking specter of "fatalism or even nihilism" (123) is postponed until the last chapter (cf. 147), as is any exposition of Heidegger's notion of "en-framing [*Gestell*]" which is mentioned for the first time on page 85.

Bearing out the aforesaid homology between language and technology, Chapter One examines Heidegger's adage that "language speaks us" (25). To gauge the implications of this pronouncement, the authors attend to two theories of language. The first account comprehends language in *instrumental* terms, namely, as a tool for communication that serves human agendas. Such instrumentalism undergirds the influential sender/receiver model by Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver which, according to Gunkel and Taylor, still dominates (too) much of contemporary media studies (33–35). While the authors may be right about this, there could have been some acknowledgement of those communication scholars who have sought out sophisticated alternatives since the 1980s, including Lawrence Grossberg's 1997 anthology *Bringing It All Back Home.*

The second view characterizes language as profoundly *constitutive.* Spelled out with reference to Kenneth Burke, James Carey, and Mark Wrathall, this view holds that language is not something we can use to talk about some pre-existing reality. Rather, as Gunkel and Taylor put it, language is "what shapes and makes this reality possible in the first place" (28). Accordingly, Heidegger can be read to advocate a defensible form of "anti-realism" (53) "without necessarily resorting to a form of linguistic idealism" (52). Though this is not made explicit, the authors seem to understand linguistic idealism in the extreme sense such that language users can spontaneously speak things into existence, without being constrained by extra-linguistic conditions or language-independent facts. Presumably, Heidegger's brand of anti-realism is not that extreme. Rather, the preceding illustration of a US presidential debate that is "cover[ed]" differently by "conservative" and "liberal" media outlets (51) suggests that Heideggerian anti-realism does allow for some kind of proto-reality which, however, gains its distinct *worldly* contours only in the course of different language games.

If so, Heidegger's anti-realist does not deny a single reality at all. Instead she will insist that this proto-reality is not a "world" yet and that there is no singular correct "world picture" of reality. To repeat, different language games disclose different worlds. Notice, though, how the authors waver between the notions of *reality shaping* and *world constitution.* In particular, it remains unclear why a domain in

which we can already identify and make reference to events and agents (viz. a public debate and its participants) does not yet qualify as a shared world. What is here presented as Heidegger's anti-realism, then, might more plausibly be viewed as a form of multi-perspectival realism or hermeneutic pluralism. Since many of Gunkel and Taylor's remarks seem to echo Richard Rorty's views from *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, an engagement with Rorty's Heidegger might have helped throw the authors' own conception of Heidegger's anti-realism into sharper relief. (While the index incorrectly points to page 6, Rorty is mentioned only once, via citing Paul Edwards, on page 8.)

Chapters Two and Three are devoted to debunking the "correspondence theory of truth." The latter can be abbreviated into the idea that the primary purpose of linguistic statements is to "copy" details from a pre-linguistic world, contrary to the *constitutive* model of language outlined above. Couched in the idiom of ideology critique ("ideological bluff" [64], "calculated deception" [71]), the discussion in Chapter Two appears both more dramatic and more politically charged than the opening chapter, culminating in the warning that uncritical endorsement of correspondence theory makes us vulnerable to a mass-mediated sense of what counts as natural—a caveat familiar from Roland Barthes's slim volume *Mythologies* (73), while Gunkel and Taylor's exposition of this *myth of neutrality* draws mainly on Langdon Winner's book *Autonomous Technology* (cf. 135).

Chapter Three examines Heidegger's media critique in proximity to Marshall McLuhan's "famous aphorism 'the medium is the message'" (119). Here the authors deploy some of the technical terms from Heidegger's magnum opus *Being and Time* when they suggest: "A Heideggerian-influenced understanding of the media enables us to intervene strategically in what is always and already ready-to-hand to make conspicuously present-at-hand what has hitherto been invisible" (ibid.). Yet the concrete workings or possible sites of such strategic intervention remain elusive, for Gunkel and Taylor focus on defending Heidegger against charges of "reactionary back-to-nature, New Age mysticism" (121) rather than on spelling out what kind of strategic action Heidegger might actually recommend.

Chapter Four, arguably the most exciting segment of the study, explores a "thematic similarity" (137) among Heidegger, McLuhan, and Jean Baudrillard, centered on the notion of "unearthly distanceless[ness]" (143; cf. 123). Heidegger used this phrase in his essay "The Thing," which the authors connect to the second of Heidegger's Bremen Lectures on "Positionality." The key insight to be gleaned from the "positional nature of Heidegger's thinking" (147) is the following: "Heidegger's importance for understanding the media resides in his relentless interrogation of the seemingly obvious in order to show how that obviousness belies various unearthly qualities that reduce things to a self-referential circuit of requisitioned applications" (158). The study then ends on an anti-climactic note: "Heidegger [. . .] does not answer the question concerning technology. Instead, he involves us in the important work of questioning, which is the philosophical task par excellence" (170).

Overall, Gunkel and Taylor's book is written as an ice breaker for social scientists. It seeks to mobilize Heidegger's unusual idiom to coax communication and media scholars from the confines of a social-science model that subscribes to correspondence theory by "default" (87, 90, 168) and remains swayed by "naïve empiri-

cism" (92). As a valiant attempt to advertise Heidegger past the disciplinary limits of philosophy, this volume has the potential to attract a broad range of readers from different fields of inquiry.

At the same time, there remains an unresolved tension between the authors' intriguing claim that Heidegger "completely reworks the assumed relationship situated between words and things" (91; cf. 168) and the sobering concession that "[q]uestions of validity, correspondence and agreement remain operational and have a considerable amount of historical weight behind them. Heidegger's point is simply that there is more to it than this" (94; cf. 84, 115). After pressing on to find out what this "more" consists of, we learn that Heidegger's unorthodox language will somehow create a reading experience that may catalyze a form of "reflexive distance" (162) which, in turn, might shield us from the "obscene" productivity (145) of technology in Baudrillard's sense. In the absence of further details or illustrations, this is a small rabbit emerging from a big hat; readers will have to decide for themselves whether it is fit to assuage the lingering worry over Heidegger's philosophical fatalism, which Ernst Cassirer highlighted long ago in *The Myth of the State.*

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Sociability and Its Enemies: German Political Theory After 1945.
By Jakob Norberg. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2014. 240 pages. $80.00 hardcover, $39.95 paperback.

Jakob Norberg's cogently argued study covers familiar ground but does so in a different key. It re-examines the theory of the public sphere in the Federal Republic of Germany with an emphasis on its early stages in which the concept of sociability (*Geselligkeit*) played a more important role than in the 1960s and 1970s when the highly charged discussion had shifted to the term *Öffentlichkeit* as the key to a definition of a democratic renewal. The study unfolds this process, beginning with a discussion of the sociability project of the journal *Die Wandlung* and an analysis of Carl Schmitt's responses to interrogation and personal exclusion after 1945, followed by two chapters dealing with Hannah Arendt's critique of bourgeois society and Reinhart Koselleck's *Critique and Crisis*, leading up to a new reading of Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). Norberg's central thesis is that the concept of sociability, primarily promoted by Dolf Sternberger in *Die Wandlung*, opened up the intellectual space in the early postwar years to address and overcome the catastrophic outcome of the Third Reich. This concept offered a different but familiar way of understanding social interaction after the defeat of Nazi concepts like *Volk*, party, state, and leader. While this approach has the distinct advantage of exploring the specific intellectual situation in Germany after 1945, it also narrows the focus and forces the author to examine the broader political discussions of the late 1950s and early 1960s as extensions of the sociability thematic. Neither in the case of Schmitt and Koselleck nor in the case of Arendt and Habermas can this be done without some losses. For instance, Norberg sets Habermas up as a defender of sociability against the criticism of Koselleck and Arendt. "Viewed against the