

Biography as Cinema Verité? Writing Steve Job's Life

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Abstract

This paper reviews the biographical film within the genre of documentary and proposes a contemporary approach to a subgenre. Neither completely fiction nor fact, it attests not just to the conceptual hybridity between *historie* and *discours*; it also permits both a creative approach to the inscription of life and a critical analysis of the temporal treatment by the biographical film creators, arguing for the genealogical approach as exemplified by Danny Boyle's filmic biography. While analytical attention is given to media specificity, this paper will broach filmic biography not merely as the media representation of an icon but also the illuminating acme bringing to life the key figure of representation with an elaboration on how the biographical film is aesthetically a visual interpellation of the individual whose life is on display. I engage with Bill Nichols's and Noel Carroll's concepts on documentary to address the hybrid characteristic found within these biographical films, Joshua Michael Stern's 2013 film release, entitled *Jobs*, and Danny Boyle's critically acclaimed 2015 *Steve Jobs* with the following research questions. First, how can one conceptually accommodate death (here Jobs's demise in 2011 arguably prompts two biographical films) within the term "life-writing"? In addition to the genealogical approach mentioned above, how do both films treat the significant notion of history upon which life-writing is itself based? Last but the most important, how does filmic interpellation work in order to bring to life the individual on which the film is based? An address of the puissance of iconography of which Jobs is arguably a symbol, this gives this writer opportunity to write on the visual writing of his life.

Keywords: Biography, Documentary, Steve Jobs, Transmediation, Gilbert Simondon, Transindividuality

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Introduction

This paper reviews the concept of life-writing within the genre of documentary, a concept that resonates with the root of “biography”: *bios* in Greek denotes “life” and *graphia* signifies writing, and proposes a contemporary approach to what has been traditionally considered a subgenre. This word prodigiously indicates the historical aspect of writing, one which coincides with this academic decision to work in and through a *genealogical investigation* of a filmic subgenre to which not much academic attention has been given. Neither completely fiction nor fact, the biographical film attests not just to a certain conceptual hybridity between *historie* and *discours*; it also gestures to a third space that permits not only a creative approach to the inscription of life but also a critical analysis of the temporal treatment by the biographical auteurs, arguing for the genealogical approach as exemplified by Danny Boyle’s filmic biography. This paper also asserts that transmediation, rethought in and through the Simondonian transduction for a more in-depth study, is perhaps the best approach to life-writing because the media transition from print to screen inheres dynamic modulations and enlargements already encapsulated in the word “biographia”. While analytic attention is given to media specificity, this paper will broach filmic biography not merely as the media representation of an icon but also the illuminating acme bringing to life the key figure of representation with an elaboration on how the biographical film is aesthetically a visual interpellation of an individual whose life is on display. This paper too engages with ongoing conceptualisations on documentary to address the hybrid characteristics found within these biographical films, Joshua Michael Stern’s 2013 film release, entitled *Jobs*, and Danny Boyle’s critically acclaimed 2015 *Steve Jobs* (its temporal structure instantiates my aforementioned thesis on *genealogy*, the premise of which are the following research questions. First, how can one conceptually accommodate death (here Job’s demise in 2011 arguably prompts these two biographical films) in the term “life-writing”? In addition to the genealogical approach mentioned above, how do both films treat the significant notion of *historie* upon which life-writing is itself based? Last but the most important, how does filmic interpellation work in order to bring to life the individual on which the film is based? With responses to these inquiries, this paper places emphasis on the filmic auteur with a wordplay on Dennis Bingham’s 2010 *Whose Lives are They Anyway?* and insists on “Whose Truths are They Anyway?” and interweaves transmediation in and through the Simondonian transduction to heighten the idea of invention, both in cultural productions and life itself, in line with Tim Ingold’s preface to Roy Wagner’s *The Invention of Culture*. In addition to the assertion above, this paper also argues that Steve Job, as a cultural *icon*, is not just an *index* to the innovative crux of the new millennium (in addition to the indexicality of Michael Fassbender as the actor roleplaying Jobs); he is also a *symbol* of the visionary thrust that propelled the advancement of communication technologies. Thus, this is an address of the *puissance* of iconography, arguably an intermixing of Bill Nichol’s poetic and performative modes of documentary, of which Jobs is arguably a symbol, gifting this writer an opportunity to write on the visual writing of his life.

Both Stern’s and Boyle’s versions can be considered biographical films compared to the more documentary style of “History of Steve Jobs”, aptly entitled and created by Greg Wyatt Jr. and available on YouTube. The differences can be detected in not just the expository tone of the documentary, one approximating objectivity and neutrality, but also the manner of the visual treatment used in Stern’s and Boyle’s biographical films. Turning this paper’s attention to Boyle’s 2015 biographical film first (Mark Kermode from *The Guardian* gives the film a four-star rating because of its creative treatment of Job’s life), this temporal examination, which has impacts on the narrative strategies, refers to John Grierson’s short but significant

definition of documentary: “a creative treatment of reality” to approach Job’s existence as lived experience, a life given to us with tight focuses on the backstage occurrences of three *momentous* events of the Apple co-founder’s life, a visual style not reliant on the Hollywood intensified continuity to present a linearised account of the subject’s life, unlike Stern’s version, which is more akin to the aforementioned filmmaking. Why the use of such a famous icon whose life has been documented again and again? As an addendum, I am more inclined toward Steve Wozniak’s contribution to computation, known for his technological inventiveness, rather than Job’s who is known more for his leadership and vision but this has to do with the conceptual premise of my paper: the transductive merging of the Peircean semiotics and Nichol’s notion of iconography and the alignment (I am in agreement with Nichol, Noel Carroll, and Carl Plantinga who enthusiastically insist this in their writings) of the argumentative or the assertive to the documentary so as to yield the cultural innovation mentioned in Ingold’s preface to *The Invention of Culture*. What follows is not merely a comparative espousal of Wyatt’s, Stern’s and Boyle’s films in terms of temporality; it is an elaboration of how communicative innovations are not merely technological but also cultural in their societal impacts, a thesis supported by Terry Flew in his introduction to his book on new media. According to Flew, notwithstanding the progressive impacts that computing and communication has on the creation of content, the various convergences afforded by technological advancements prompt cultural changes, most of them dynamic and beneficial to the contemporary emphasis on content creation. This emphasis on the cultural significance of a protean subgenre etymologically adheres to the *writing of life* (and the authorship implied in the term itself) the signifying impact of which inspires change. In short, the perceptual ebullience that follows such Eureka moments, the Simondonian resonances, has affirmative psychological influence culminating in cultural transmutation, a process that Simondon would recognise as imaginative transduction resulting in transindividuality, a concept that has as its premise “creative contribution” in cultural terms rather than consumption. In fact, if there is any cultural focus on media consumption, it is aligned with media production, made evident by Nichol’s (2001) espousal of the experimental and *avant garde* aspects found within the poetic and the performative modes of documentary, modes which also raise inquires “about what is knowledge. What counts as understanding or comprehension?” (130). These characteristics teased out from Nichol’s take on the various modes of documentary do not merely address cinematic realism but *the authenticity inherent to the writing of someone’s life*.

Creatively Moving Beyond the Expository With Time

While most would start a paper on documentary films with the divide between fiction and nonfiction films, I shall examine instead Wyatt’s and Stern’s versions in relation to the Hollywood intensified continuity style. Wyatt’s linearised account of Job’s life is quite contrary to Stern’s version which emphasises Job’s achievements, a filmic style catering to his fans. The latter’s is a Hollywood tribute to Jobs, aptly described by Brian Moylan for *The Guardian* as “fan service”. The temporal charting of Job’s life from his days at Reeds College to the 2001 introduction of the iPod (mostly in the Hollywood intensified continuous style with the exception of the introductory scene) reworks time in favour of the empirical, an emphatically materialised aspect of filmmaking in order to present a biopic with technological details, biographical content and interesting visuals in a manner that would make it firstly a commercial success with the Apple fans and, secondly, but more importantly to this paper, an exemplar of Nichol’s discussion of the iconic in “History, Myth and Narrative” (1987), which builds our messianic expectations in line with the myth-making propensity that inheres with documentary filmmaking. *RogerEbert.com*’s reviewer gives this

film two stars rating. I watched Boyle's and Stern's versions years back and thought very highly of Boyle's version because of its clever treatment of time. Stern's *Jobs* turns out to be a regular biopic, not as disappointing as RogerEbert.com would have it but I was watching the biographical film for different reasons. Its style is similar to Matt Johnson's 2023 *Blackberry* which turns out to be more substantially engaging in narrative terms, as the filmic *historie* of Blackberry is given to us with the visual finesse of sophisticated camera work. By comparison, Wyatt's "History of Steve Jobs" is a straightforward account of the subject's life, merely providing the significant details of the subject's life as facts. It is nonfictional in its manner of approach to life-writing whereas Stern's and Boyle's versions could be considered straddling between fiction and fact, neither completely fictional nor totally nonfictional. If we are looking for veracity in the presumed neutral or objective tones of life writing (here gesturing to Carroll's term for nonfiction films, "presumptive assertion" (1997), we must heed how Kermode (15/11/2015) astutely concludes his review of the 2015 biographical film: "if we find truth in the drama [and he does], then that truth belongs to Sorkin [the scriptwriter]" (*The Guardian*). This truth, (un)fortunately, is not the truth of *cinema verité* nor direct cinema. It is a truth at which Aaron Sorkin arrives after spending a lot of time with Lisa Brennon-Jobs, Job's daughter, a truth in line with the post-truth inclinations of the contemporary milieu, neither non-truth nor the truth with a capitalised T. This is further reinforced by Nichol's (1991) discussion on representing reality in the chapter "Telling Stories with Evidence and Arguments": "Their respective orientations, toward a world and toward *the* world, sharply distinguish fiction and documentary. But the effect of providing, as if for the first time, a memorable form for experiences and concepts that the text purports only to reveal and reflect is a common bond between them... We are offered a world but a world different from any other by dint of its basis in history itself... In representing it we introduce the subjectivities and vicissitudes, the issues of style and form that govern discussion of any text" (113, author's emphasis). This, in effect, simply renders clear what follows later in this paper on realist approximations, whether one is alluding to cinematic realism or documentary or filmic biography: the knowledge one gains of someone's life will always be "a particular way of seeing" this life, which is based on a truth claim or a fact.

Boyle's 2015 *Steve Jobs* cinematically debunks the neutral, objective and factual facets detected in Wyatt's recount, a felicitous instance of the expository category of Nichol's six modes of documentary. And it definitely reveals the inadequacies of the documentary as either an indexical record or the documentary as assertion, elaborated by Carl Plantinga (2003) in "What a Documentary is, After All". Biographical films cannot be tagged with the features of conventional documentary because of the functional autonomy of this subgenre, again indicating the auteur's creativity. They are both an indexical record as well as an *assertion* (this phrase is italicized here because Boyle's biographical film can be considered as *arguing for* invention, cinematographically reflected in the transitions made from 16 mm filming to 35 mm and then to digital filmmaking to represent the three major Apple events that occurred during the 1980s and 90s). *Steve Jobs* carries within it a thesis for the innovative vision that the subject embodies and it is obviously a filmic representation of an individual's life. Temporally, it also arguably attests to the genealogical style that accompanies good biographical films, brilliantly reworked to permit visual glimpses of the subject's character that we may not have intuited if provided a straightforward, continuous recount of Job's life. In fact, one can assert that Boyle's biographical film affirms life-writing as an intuitive and subjective meditation of the objective and factual occurrences of the depicted individual's existence. This correlates with Nichol's "asymptote congruence" which he expounds in "Representing Reality", a mathematical conceptualisation on the spacetime curvature that has empirical import to the contrary terms, *discours* and *historie*, which in

accordance to Emile Benevise's (1966) aesthetics, signals respectively "subjective" and "objective" approaches. His term, when read in line with the biographical, draws out and renders clear *the juxtaposition between the assertive and the suggestive dimensions of this subgenre*. The intricacies of the biographical become evident when one sees both the assertive and suggestive encapsulated in this imagistic and dexterous centrifuge. Noting that the biographical film is an inscriptive approximation does not mean that it is all experiential, the conceptual can be teased out, which is rendered obvious by this conceptual attempt. On the empirical, one must separate that from the material aspects of filmmaking, biographical or otherwise. In fact, Jean Luc Godard's essayistic contribution, *Historie(s) du cinema*, is considered by many as the pinnacle of experimental filmmaking during his time; one has to connect his filmic content to the structural composition of images, which, akin to the Eisensteinian montage, reworks visual simultaneity in order to instil deliberation.

While comparably contrasting the Bazinian brand of realism, which is touted to be more the premise of biographical filmmaking, Godard's essayistic films do not sacrifice the material dimensions of his cinematographic method for the increased intellectual attention required in assessing or evaluating his imagistic manipulation. I often thought that the material aspects of Godard's films become more starkly presented with the use of imagistic juxtapositions, an altered appropriation of Vivian Sobchack's view of filmic materiality. Sobchack's approach is prompted by "the problematics of the professional gaze" also cited in Nichol's (1987) take on documentary, the introduction of which refers to the necessity for a body as evidence, appositely suggested by the Latin term, *habeas corpus*, to which Nichols refer that not only informs the necessity of the corpse in any legal proceeding of homicidal implications but also its legitimate requirement as the iconic embodiment in film. To Sobchack, "the concern for getting a clear and unobstructed image, and the belief that it is possible to strip that image, that representation, of human bias and perspective and ethicality so that it is 'objective,' indelibly marks the inscriptions of the professional gaze with their own problematic ethical perspective in the fact of human mortality and visual taboo" (14). This citation on the clinical gaze, in a way, directs our attention to how biography, as part of the umbrella term 'documentary', is not completely subjective despite its creative approaches to the subject's life. This film materiality bears testimony to Gregory Currie's (1999) "traces" (another term for the indexicality of the photographic) rather than his version of "testimony" and more, given that, while it correspondingly strives to indicate filmic denotation rather than connotation, it also casts light on the material composition of the medium used. In fact, this mediation is only taken to a different level in the viewer's interpretative approach to the filmic biography. Plantinga's (2003) comprehensive attempt at defining "documentary" aids my endeavour to address contemporarily "biography" with the former's examination of its underdetermined premise by arguing for a "new ethos of authenticity" and its subsequent overdetermination evident in the director's "creative manipulations and staging". It is, again, this desire for authenticity that I embarked on this research, investigating the possibility for an approach to the biographical film as something experienced, and, consequently sensorial, in addition to its legitimated aspect.

Performing the Poetic With the Staging of the Invisible

Poetically intuitive since one cannot ignore his treatment of time, Boyle's version reworks the theatrical technique of staging by harnessing the *moments* surrounding the three major campaigns of Apple during the twentieth century: the 1984 launch of Lisa shot with 16 mm filmstock, the 1988 release of Apple II in 35 mm and the 1998 Mackintosh promotion with digital filming. Employing Steve Wozniak as a consultant for his filmic script, Aaron Sorokin

has the advantage of a first-hand account of the former's relationship with Jobs and Job's relationship with his daughter, flashed out authentically in these three filmic moments. It is noteworthy that these events are presented to us with cinematographic differences. Whereas Boyle cinematically aligns Apple's technological innovations with the progress made in filmmaking, one needs to refocus attention to the signs of deixis which, according to the Oxford reference dictionary, would be *discours*, the conversational facet underpinning the backstage drama. In line with this, Currie's (1999) "testimony" appears to have conceptual purchase too when this analysis turns its attention to the illocutionary force of the performative. The performative aspect of the word "moment" is given focus here because of its synonymous relation to the word "stage", appositely linking its temporal significance with Kermode's (15/11/2015) use of the phrase "three-act structure". These "moments" correspond to the Simondonian transduction whereby the human, always *with technics*, contributes socio-culturally, here in the form of (the two Steves' *Eureka moment*) democratised and personalised devices that forever changed how man communicates with one another. One can even say that their invention of the personal computer ushers in the digital age, another reason why this paper is on Job whose life is one defined by the creativity, communication and collaboration that are premises of digitisation and media convergence. These cinematographic uses not only spotlight the durational bases of this filmic biography but also reflexively ties to the technological innovations implied by the etymology of "moment" that is derived from its Latin source "momentum" with semantic connotation to "movement", and the transitions made as cinematic adaptations of Walter Isaacson's biographical book on Jobs, released immediately after the latter's death in October 2011.

If the significant events that occur at the Apple campaigns are given to us backstage in a three-act structure, it is the performative force of the word "stage" that should be at the forestage in Boyle's version. Corresponding to Plantinga's exposition on "the use of staged and re-enacted scenes" in the early versions of *cinema verité*, the staged and re-enacted elements do more than Currie's "traces", the accurate visual presentation of the scene, and therefore are not merely Plantinga's "asserted veridical representation", a term arguably comparable to the former's use of "traces" (2005, 112), both indicating the fidelity of the photographic. It is the assertion here that the illocutionary act of saying and showing, also the premises of the essay film as defined by Laura Rascaroli in "The Essay Film: Problems, Definitions, Textual Commitments" figuratively actualises Job. Noting that in the glossary to *Life-Writing* (1995), "essay" is defined in its "later application to biographical works it suggested an easy or cursory handling of a life story, limited to a few aspects of a life and abandoning the narrative, or chronological, approach" (22), this paper retrieves the portion "limited to a few aspects of life and abandoning the narrative, or chronological, approach" in order to enhance the essayistic Boyle's biographical experimentation, an approach that invites a type of viewing that makes us move from seeing the biographical film as mere "presumptive fact", thereby not just merely Carroll's (1997) "film of presumptive assertion", also cited in Plantinga's article. However, Boyle's version cannot be said to evince the "transgressive" dimension of the essay film as well because contemporary American filmmaking has borrowed a lot cinematographically from experimental European films. Rascaroli (2008) alludes to Theodore Adorno's concept of 'heresy' in the latter's *Notes to Literature*, a literary technique that signals the indeterminacy, openness and non-fixity of the essay film and now refers too to the new biographical film which leans towards the experimental and arthouse characteristics found in the essayistic. These filmic emergences (the word "emergence" is used with conceptual care) evidently do not adhere to the *historie*, instead it reworks the conversational, or, more appropriately the dialogic, aspect of *discours*

in a transductive manner, indirectly showing *the staged quality* of the visual writing of Job's life, which hinges on cinematography in its portrayal of the key figure's life, making more pronounced the curation, manipulation and edition of details in biographical writing and filmmaking. These filmic events disrupt the Hollywood intensified continuity editing, a kind of editing that simulates the linearity of thought. It is the interruption of the intensified continuity editing that indicates how Stern's version, structured more likely the way fiction films are made that makes it act as a foil to Boyle's version. In fact, Rascaroli's (2008) discussion on the essay film is advantageous to my insistence that biographic films are not merely Plantinga's "asserted veridical representation"; its genealogical premise is given creative force by the thesis of this paper: Job's life is given to us (given in the sense of "gift") by way of iconographic interpellation, a conceptual transducing of both Rascaroli's (2008) "interpellation of the gaze" with Nichol's (1987) sense of the iconographic, which "[significantly and paradoxically] incarnates... [the] body as a precarious balance of person, persona and narrative agent that cannot be any one of these possibilities entirely" (13). Taking Nichol's use of iconography to the level of realism, Boyle's film arguably is an instance of the interweaving of both the Peircean use of "icon" as "resemblance or likeness" and the icon as the renowned British actor who plays the role of Steve Jobs as well as the iconic status of Steve Jobs himself, further enhanced by his symbolic status as the visionary who transformed the manner we engage with one another globally by *shifting the contemporary emphasis from commutation to communication*. Thus it is not just the semantic synonymy of "movement" (also prodigiously indicating the visual writing of motion pictures) as indicated by my earlier espousal of the "momentous"; it is the "momentous" inventiveness of Job's vision and Wozniak's materialisation of that vision.

Using the term "iconographic interpellation" here means a conceptual departure from Louis Althusser's terms which means the hailing to being of a subject that will freely subject himself to the dominant ideology of the society within which he is embedded. This is not an allusion to the Althusserian subjectivation but *the invocative* implication within the word which significantly highlights the "coming into being" of the subject in the visual writing of his life. This use is in addition to Rascaroli's (2008) definition of interpellation which focuses on how the viewer is called upon to visually partake of the filmic content of the documentary, an engagement that relies on Nichol's "ways of seeing" in *Representing Reality*, manners of approach that consider both the objectivity of a historical take and the subjectivity of the directorial auteur at once. One can infer in this interpellative act the performative force of the illocutionary mentioned earlier. According to Plantinga (2003), the "saying" could be inferred as being more assertive than the "showing", a characteristic of the ethnographic documentary, but most film theorists would insist that both the acts of saying and showing can be assertive. But, this paper concerns itself with how the visibility of the showing and the verbiage of the saying provide presence to the absence of the actual person. This is further enriched by the notion of performance which also suggests the possibility of an interlocution and communicative presence of a "you" to an "I", the actor communicating with another actor or the audience or the character interacting with the viewer, the filmmaker with the actor et cetera, an illocutionary demonstration. The "I" as identified cannot be actualised unless there is the "you" in any communicative act, because the process of identity formation in any communicative situation necessarily involves speech acts that have as its fundamental the more than one. More importantly, it is not subjectivation but an interpretative freeing of this person's life in an act of mourning: any biographical creation is a memorious event even if this person whose life is being written is still alive. It is, of course, more poignant when the individual whose life is depicted has passed on. Noteworthy is the fact that Jobs is symbolic of this insatiable desire for innovation, something I can only affirm. Thus this approach to

life-writing reconsiders the Heideggerian being-toward-death: life revealing itself in its move toward death, a paradoxical situation that affirms life due to the fact that one's mortality has to be dealt with at some point. This, for Jobs, occurred in 2009 when confronted with his possibly fatal illness, which is most likely the cause for his inspirational advice on not wasting time.

Mackintosh's Culture of Invention

Time is, indeed, of the essence here because of my emphasis on 'invention' rather than convention. Ingold's introduction to Wagner's *The Invention of Culture* speaks of the inevitability of cultural conventions and how convention and invention imply each other. But this paper insists that the theme of "invention" should take precedence due neither to its novel nor progressive implications (both significantly crucial to our existence) but how it signals the passing of time correlating to life as a mutable flow, only to be momentarily fixed when identified. Lukac's words on discursive films, also cited in Rascaroli's 2008 article, ring true for the new biographical film: "the essayist must now become conscious of his own self, must find himself and build something of himself" (26), words of the profoundest reminder that we invent so that extensions of ourselves, as Marshall McLuhan would have it, could be found, extensions reflective of who we are. It is part of the thesis here that Wyatt Jr., Stern and Boyle, in their filmic representations of Job's life, unwittingly respond to Bingham's title on the biopic. These filmic representations are not just on Job's life but theirs too even as they write his visually; a part of their becoming is enacted with the making of Job's biography in and through the transductive process. Thus something of the same could be said of the biographical: it is not merely the filmmaker or scriptwriter finding himself but us, the audience, collectively finding the individual whose life is exhibited. This interpellation as a type of definitive rediscovery that calls forth not just the definiteness of identity but also the transmediation implied in the word "biographia", the textual refiguring of the real hybridised with the filmic as a re-enacted simulation coming forth as cultural production, an iconographic (re)presentation, of a person's written life. This transmedia re-enactment oddly attests not to the objective recount in the sense of documenting, whether, in Nichol's terms, expository, observational, performative, reflexive or poetic, but the subjective employment of signs, textual or otherwise. In fact, the various biographical versions exemplify our incessant pursuit of the real, the authentic Steve Jobs. Therefore, can one say that the more creative portrayals contain within themselves the potential for an alternative type of veridical addresses? Plantinga's (2003) article alludes to the objections posed by a number of documentary theorists against the hybridised notion of the objective and subjective, concluding with a somewhat facile comment that the fuzziness of boundary is not a good enough argument for propounding this hybrid, an indirect invitation for this rejoinder: while one cannot use the fuzziness of this border as an argument for championing the hybrid, one can extrapolate how the elasticity of the boundary can work in one's favour in accomplishing a more authentic inscriptive accommodation of the historical figure's life. Boyle's biographical film rides on Jacques Lacan's objective-subjective spectrum whose psychoanalytic theory will explain how the identification as interpellation works. The filmic identification with the subject of the nonfiction film occurs when there is a "suture" that Jacques Alain-Miller works with to describe the identificatory process.

Boyle's *Steve Jobs*, in effect, directs attention to the specular and affective identificatory processes of psychoanalysis, the definitions of which could found too in *Life-Writing*, the glossary. It presents these processes of identity constitution as a double bind, a threading that doubles between the viewer and the subject of the biographical film in and through not just

an ideal image but also an idealised point of view from which the subject sees the image, the imperfection of which then repels him even as he is attracted to it. The iconic reflexivity is evident when the viewer sees the filmic subject as the ideal ego via the imaginary and then the ego ideal via the symbolic, both the ideal image for which the subject strives as well as the inherent flaws that make the ideal image not that perfect after all. And this is detected in Kermode's review when he writes: "but it's hard to imagine either of them matching Fassbender's capacity to engage and repel simultaneously. We are at once appalled by Job's denial of his daughter, yet somewhat swayed by Sorkin's sympathetic suggestion that his own adoption was the traumatic key to both his success and failure" (*The Guardian*, 15/11/2015).

Conclusion

Provisionally concluding here with a word on the Simondonian 'transduction', which is a term proposing the innovative dynamism of the altered pedigree of my genealogical address, evidenced by the multi-layered subjectivity elaborated above and supported by Nichol's use of Peircean semiotics. I shall dwell a little on the ontogenetic process that is an indication of the nature of all life. Key to Simondon's transindividuation is the creator's transductive contribution (transductive because the source code itself is a hybrid between the real and representative, human and technics) to the community by individuals who are tributes to lives well lived. Boyle's 2015 *Steve Jobs* bears testament to the developmental process of the key figure's technological success as well as his personal failures. Memorable they may be, the content of these biographical films matters because they represent lives that are no longer present as such, absent bodies that require presences in the forms of simulations, imitations and representations. One can even assert that the absences of the subjects of life-writing are the very *raison d'être* for the presencing of the writing itself. All sorts of information could be found on Jobs and by him online, indicating the type of legacy he leaves behind. Forbes' "Steve Jobs' Legacy Still Drives Apple's Current and Future Products", written by Tim Bajarin, attributes Apple's ever-innovative philosophy to Jobs' own vision of a "culture of innovation". This "Apple way" is the argumentative crux of the three biographical films elaborated. This information proliferates together with false information too but this only attests to the psychological impact left by a man who dared to live life to its fullest.

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