



2010 redux

Description

This audio file (generated by Speechify's synthetic voice) contains the [first](#) 41 regular weekly blog posts I published starting in 2010. I began the blog after the publication of my book, *The Tuning of Place*.

I have just called on ChatGPT to set the context for the original content. My prompt: "This content was first published in 2010. Position these blog posts in historical context. What has happened since then in terms of relevant events, style, commentary and content?" I've adapted the rest of this current post from ChatGPT's response.

These posts were first published in 2010, during a particular moment in the development of digital media, design theory, and academic discourse. Looking back from the vantage point of 2025, I can now place them in historical context.

At that time, blogs, Wikipedia, and early forms of online scholarly writing represented the open and textual character of the web. The rhetoric of "hypertext" still carried the promise of decentralised, user-driven engagement. I noted even then that this promise was giving way to indexing and search especially via Google. Since then, hyperlink culture has largely been eclipsed by algorithmic feeds, predictive search, and the dominance of large platforms.

My reflections on archives, secrecy, and Jacques Derrida's concept of "archive fever" now seem especially relevant in light of the transformations brought about by WikiLeaks, the Snowden revelations, and the steady growth of data leaks and digital whistleblowing. (I addressed these in [later posts](#).) Today, discussions about digital archives are inseparable from concerns about surveillance, data ethics, and the life cycle of information in the age of generative AI.

My posts about voice, sound, and spatial acoustics (informed by scholars such as Thibaud and Augoyard) anticipated the turn to sound studies that gained traction in the 2010s. Since then, sound mapping, ambient sound design, and podcasting have emerged as key domains of creative and critical engagement. Voice interfaces have become mundane "Siri and Alexa are now part of the domestic soundscape" yet raise fresh concerns around presence, gender, and agency.

In 2010, I reflected on the decline of fixed mass media schedules and the rise of asynchronous media use, particularly among younger audiences. Since then, we've seen an intensification of fragmented temporality, curated playlists, push notifications, and streaming media's algorithmic cycles. Temporal rhythms are now governed less by the broadcaster's clock and more by data-driven infrastructures.

I was also writing during a period of transition in universities – especially in the UK – when practice-led research was being consolidated under the REF framework. What counted as legitimate research was under review, with grey literature, creative outputs, and multimodal dissemination gaining traction. These debates continue today, with new dimensions added by the use of AI tools in research and writing.

Several of the blog posts explored metaphors of tuning, calibration, and remainder – drawing analogies between architecture and music, and challenging notions of ideal form and harmony. In many ways, I was trying to describe a space for improvisation, slippage, and adjustment – themes that have since found new expression in discourses of resilience, adaptation, and postcolonial spatial practices.

My interests in hermeneutics and ethics positioned me, then as now, in dialogue with – but also in distinction from – the more totalising gestures of critical theory. Rather than simply unmasking or exposing, I was advocating for interpretive openness, difference, and the ethical commitments entailed in sustained engagement. That line of thought now encounters fresh urgency in the context of AI, automation, and machine-led judgement.

One post in particular, [The Future is Unremarkable](#), argued that the most significant technological shifts were those that blended into the background. That argument has only deepened. Technologies of everyday life – mobile phones, cloud infrastructure, AI recommendation systems – are now less visible than ever, even as they shape our habits, our environments, and our systems of value.

These early blog entries caught a transition point – just after the rise of social media, just before the dominance of the platform economy, and well before the explosion of generative AI. The themes of temporality, interpretation, proximity, secrecy, voice, and the ethics of information remain salient – though now refracted through different devices, infrastructures, and cultural formations.

If the archive conserves, it also destabilises – a paradox that Derrida recognised. These old posts now carry a kind of archival noise: not quite resolved, but still resonant.

This audio is delivered with greater panache than I could manage with my own voice, synthetic or otherwise. The reading goes for over two hours and includes references and meta data. It can also be accessed in podcast format by copy pasting this url into a podcast service such as Apple Podcast:
<http://richardcoyne.com/category/podcast/feed/>

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Date Created

July 27, 2025

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