

# Architecture as Media Theory

Seminar in the History of Art and Architecture UG 4.608 / G 4.609

Will Lockett (wlockett@mit.edu)

E15-054 [Wiesner Building, room 054]

Office: 1-235 [Building 1, Room 235]

Mon. and Wed. 9:30am to 11:00am

Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00pm to 2:00pm

TA: Manar Moursi (mmoursi@mit.edu)

## Course Description

Building does media-theoretical work. Together, we weave the inseparable threads of making and thinking, illuminating their manner of inhering in the architectural problematics of our time.

The line between the wild (i.e., nature) and domestic (i.e., culture) was drawn by the plough that marked off the dwelling (architecture's most primal form) from the forest, the desert, and the beast. Architecture mediates environmental conditions; it allows for inhabitation amidst the inhospitable. Temporary architectures facilitate the extraction, processing, and transportation of natural resources. By managing these extractive practices logistically, architecture came to house the labor required for maintaining industrial infrastructure. Company towns, rail lines, and telegraph poles attract and concentrate populations of laborers. Mining camps are among the first sites of geological exploration while also galvanizing the pre-scientific art of alchemical metallurgy and, much later, motivating the labor politics of revolutionary workers organizations.

As extractive technologies expanded in space and intensified in efficiency, population management and control became a central architectural concern. What we call *modern* is defined, on the one hand (and from the perspective of the State), as a new scale and pace of territorial expansion, resource extraction, and production that was also (from the perspective of the individual), a constant struggle for dignity: a quality of life often sheltered by the home. While the home (i.e., privacy) became inextricable from industrialized labor through the mechanization of the household, the city (i.e., publicity) became an increasingly contentious ground of conflict between police, crowds, and the mass media organs of heads of state.

In the wake of World War II, American architects emerged as the visionaries of an electronic, computationally intensive global communications system—at once neo-colonial and techno-Utopian. Abandoning the modernist dream of the machine made subservient to Man's needs and desires, post-war architects negotiated an ambivalent embrace of electronic computing technologies, understood both as a source of ease and as harbingers of new forms of exploitation and control. The repressed fear of a return to global conflict manifest as much in the glass aquariums of mid-century office buildings as in the experiments of avant-garde sound installation artists, responsive environment designers, and the intellectuals of globalized multiculturalism.

Yet such paranoia manifest not only as transparent walls and immersive, electronically augmented modes of dwelling. It also motivated a reinvention of containment and policing by means of 'soft control' paralleled by escalation in the architectural capacity of the carceral state and the logistical reach of multinational capital. This course will trace a knot entwining the media-ecological beginnings of built form with the contemporary contradiction between incarceration and techno-utopianism; it will use canonical texts from architectural history and criticism to form archival threads while equipping you with the media theoretical tools needed to interlace and untangle them.

## Architecture as Media Theory

[ Schedule at a Glance ]

### Module 1 — Environmental Mediators

WEEK 1 / February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> / Carboniferous Capitalism / *MON.* [Introduction] / *WED.* Mumford  
WEEK 2 / February 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>st</sup> / Environmental Management / *MON.* Banham / *WED.* Schafer  
WEEK 3 / February 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> / Eco-Feminist World Building / *TUE.* LeGuin / *WED.* Haraway  
WEEK 4 / February 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> / Primitivist Ontology / *MON.* / Ingold / *WED.* Serres + Seigert

### Module 2 — Rebuilding Thinking

WEEK 5 / March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> / Mechanization and Ornament / *MON.* Giedion / *WED.* Gallo  
WEEK 6 / March 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> / Dwelling and Publicity / *MON.* Heidegger / *WED.* Arendt  
WEEK 7 / March 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> / Mobilization and Rebuilding / *MON.* Çelik Alexander / *WED.* Galison

WEEK 8 / March 23<sup>rd</sup> —25<sup>th</sup> / [Spring Break] / [No Class]

### Module 3 — Cybernetic Architecture

WEEK 9 / March 30<sup>th</sup>—April 1<sup>st</sup> / The Cybernetic Surround / *MON.* Martin / *WED.* Colomina  
WEEK 10 / April 6<sup>th</sup> — April 8<sup>st</sup> / Whole Systems Thinking / *MON.* Fuller + McLuhan / *WED.* Wigley  
WEEK 11 / April 13<sup>th</sup> — 15<sup>th</sup> / Postmodern Mobility / *MON.* Price and Littlewood / *WED.* Jameson + Venturi

### Module 4 — Containment and Insurgency

WEEK 12 / April 20<sup>th</sup> — 22<sup>nd</sup> / Enclosure / *MON.* [Patriot's Day] / *WED.* Jacobs + Hartman  
WEEK 13 / April 27<sup>th</sup> — 29<sup>nd</sup> / Resistance / *MON.* Foucault / *WED.* Debord + Goodman  
WEEK 14 / May 4<sup>th</sup> — May 6<sup>th</sup> / Neutralization / *MON.* Feldman / *WED.* Weizman  
WEEK 15 / May 11<sup>th</sup> / [ Review and Discussion ]

## Readings

All course readings will be provided on MIT Stellar as .pdf files. I recommend these theoretical works:

Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, 1934.  
Ursula K. LeGuin, *The Dispossessed*, 1974.  
Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions*, 1989.  
Sigfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command*, 1948.  
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, 1861.  
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 1975.  
Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 1999.

And this mix of canonical and contemporary scholarly works of art-architectural history and criticism:

Reyner Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-tempered Environment*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1984.  
Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 1935.  
Le Corbusier, *Toward an Architecture*, trans. John Goodman, 1928 [2007].  
Reinhold Martin, *The Organizational Complex*, 2003.  
Mark Wigley, *Buckminster Fuller Inc. Architecture in the Age of Radio*, 2015.  
Robert Venturi et al. *Learning from Las Vegas*, revised edition, 1977 [2001].  
Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence*, 1991.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to:

- 1.) Observe, describe, and analyze built form using a conceptual repertoire drawn from canonical media studies scholars: media ecology (Mumford and Ingold); political theology (Heidegger and Arendt); German Media Theory (Martin and Gallo); postmodernism (Jameson and Venturi); and genealogical analysis (Foucault and Hartman).
- 2.) Keep a notebook. Use diagrammatic formalisms and concrete-textual composition as guidance for thought. Learn to dwell on the movement of reflection and shape reflection using the graphical organization of structure, motion, position, and text. Students may refine results of in-class diagramming session for module papers. Students deepen techniques of graphic- and concrete-textual idea formulation in dialogue with the instructor, TA, and [CAST Dasha Zhukova Distinguished Visiting Artist, Matthew Ritchie](#).
- 3.) Propose primary source research programs using methods that discriminate between architecture, urbanism, geography, and ecology while appreciating the consequences of all those methods.
- 4.) Demonstrate familiarity with major facets of the contemporary architectural situation by synthesizing historical, theoretical, and preliminary primary-source research into short, probing essays. Learn to converse in the architectural terms of our time.
- 5.) Produce articulate prose that describe, situate, and evaluate architectural form with reference to persistent topics of cultural, political, and economic significance. Your thoughts can become thought-image models to which other turn when wayfinding paths from urgency to action.

These outcomes will prepare you for undergraduate thesis research, graduate school applications, and for the intellectual and political wayfinding required of architects in contemporary design firms. The course will also equip you with a design vocabulary and cultural capital necessary for pursuing internships and entry-level positions in design and architecture firms. It will also help you understand research in the material sciences; “smart” infrastructure; engineering; and ecology in historical context, freeing you of the confines of questioning bound by disciplinary tools sets.

## Evaluation Breakdown.

Attendance-Participation 20%, *and*  
Reading Responsibilities 20% [4 x 5%], *and*  
Module Papers 60% [4 x 15%], *or*  
Research Project 60% — Proposal [1 x 10%] and Final Paper [1 x 50%]

### → Mandatory Evaluation Criteria

#### Attendance-Participation

Do the readings before class. Email me if you have reason to miss a class. Beyond 4 absences is an issue.

#### Reading Responsibility x 4

Each class begins with me opening the floor to the reading respondents. You must take responsibility for four readings: one from each of the four modules. To take responsibility for a reading, you must first read it carefully; then you decide on your 'way in'. Draw your colleagues' attention to a passage in the text. Ask a question about that passage; connect it to another reading; make cogent a connection to current events or personal experiences. *No summarizing!* This is not a presentation. Nor is it a personal essay. It is a responsibility that is satisfied by offering a thoughtful and well-informed starting point for class discussion; give us a way into your thinking and reading; open a space for collective reflection.

Students will sign up for their readings using a spreadsheet linked in Stellar. For each reading, they will submit to me (by email) a short, 250-500 word paragraph and any relevant links. You might start your message to me with a four-or-five-sentence block quote. After pointing us to a page number, read the passage aloud; then raise some points of comparison, ask a searching question, or simply ask for clarification while guiding us through the sequence of thoughts the text generated for you. In this case, you are not submitting a formal academic text; it is a rough sketch in full-sentence, paragraph form. These emails will be an important way for you to force yourself to write regularly, building toward your module papers in a structured way that helps me get a sense of how the readings are affecting your thinking.

### → Options for Evaluation Methods (You Must Pick One)

#### Module Papers x 4 (Standard Outcome, Available to Undergraduate and Graduate Students)

At the end of each module, you will write a 3-to-4-page essay (750-1000 words). These are academic texts requiring proper citations. I will provide you with topical questions for each module. These essays are meant to demonstrate that you have developed a rigorous practice of slow, careful reading. Such a demonstration requires accurate representation of course authors' arguments; it also requires that you be able to formulate questions and make claims about primary source material in light of those readings. You are being graded on your ability to read texts closely and bring course authors into dialogue with one another. While close-reading course authors is the mainstay of your evaluation, I will also provide opportunities for you to experiment with primary source research through field work. A note on reading: while some sessions require readings of over 25 pages, I will always provide guidance on where to focus your efforts. Graduate students do extra reading, but also have the option of focusing that reading with the help of the Graduate Student Addendum when it come to the Graduate Theory Reading lists. All module papers are due at 11:59pm, by email, on the Friday following the final Wednesday class for that module. If you are a graduate student and you take this route, your final module paper must be 10-pages long or incorporate a diagram/modeling component that exhibits significant involvement in the development of techniques of graphic and concrete-textual thought probing and guided reflection.

## Research Project — Proposal and Final Paper (Graduate Students Only)

Graduate students have the option of using the class to complete a major research project. You must seek approval for this outcome from me in advance by email or during office hours. I recommend this outcome only if you can see how the class will contribute to your Master's Thesis or Ph.D. Dissertation project. As a theory course, there is the danger that you will become distracted by big ideas and wander off into philosophical musings. If you are willing to take that risk, I can help you use the course to learn how to gel theory into the formulation of research questions and primary source research. The proposal is due the day before Spring Break and the paper is due on the Last Day of Classes before the exam period.

Your project begins with a 1,000 – 1,500 word [4-6 page] Paper Proposal. That paper proposal must accomplish the following items:

- 1.) What is your primary source?
- 2.) What question are you asking of that source? Are you trying to link it to a particular thematic area from one of the modules? In other words, are you questioning whether there is a way to forge a connection with a particular body of thought but are not sure if your project pertains? If so, where are you going to go looking for that connection? Is that search viable in 14 weeks? Ideally, explain to me how you think the connection of theory and source material arises out of the materials you are engaging. If you don't have that already, let's make sure you see how that might work before you go any further.
- 3.) List at least 6 secondary sources that will help you fit those materials into an existing discussion. You don't need to figure out how you will contribute to that discussion but you must show that you have an idea of what you need to read to get a sense of what the key talking points are in that discussion. Provide an account of your sense of how that preexisting discussion works by engaging at least 2 of these sources in greater detail.
- 4.) Use the Graduate Addendum to identify the main theoretical thread that you want to follow throughout the course. For example, have some idea of whether you want to jump down the rabbit hole of tool-being and the deep time of machines; if you want to pursue an historical epistemology of gendered narrative structures in scientific practices; if you want to engage the political theology of institutional formation as reformulated by computational media; or if you want to build bridges between the media history of colonialism and black studies.

The proposal may be written in a more casual tone. It is meant as a way of structuring a conversation with me. Your final paper is a realization of that research proposal.

### Paper Formatting (Module Papers)

- Academic citation style throughout (Chicago Style recommended)
- 11 or 12-point Times New Roman font
- Double spaced
- Standard margins
- Student's name, professor's name, date, course name, and paper title at the top of the first page
- Page numbers in top right-hand corner of each page.

All written assignments must adhere to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's standards of academic integrity. (For details: [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity) ). To meet these requirements, you are invited to use consistently any standard academic citation style. (For quick citation help: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/> )

### Grade Scale

A = 95-100%	C+ = 77-79%
A- = 90-94%	C- = 70-72%
B+ = 87-89%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 83-86%	D = 63-66%
B- = 80-82%	F = 0-62%

### Evaluation Rubric

A — The student came to every class or provided a legitimate excuse for any absence. They came to class with the readings prepared in advance. They listened carefully, took notes, and contributed thoughtful questions and comments. For their four reading responses, their selection of quotations (and their commentary or suggestions for discussion) demonstrated close reading and interest in further inquiry. For the four module papers, they presented a collection of primary and secondary sources that were oriented cogently toward a chosen topic; that accurately represented course authors' views; and that demonstrated their understanding of media theory and its imbrication with architectural practice by synthesizing such theory with original research and thought.

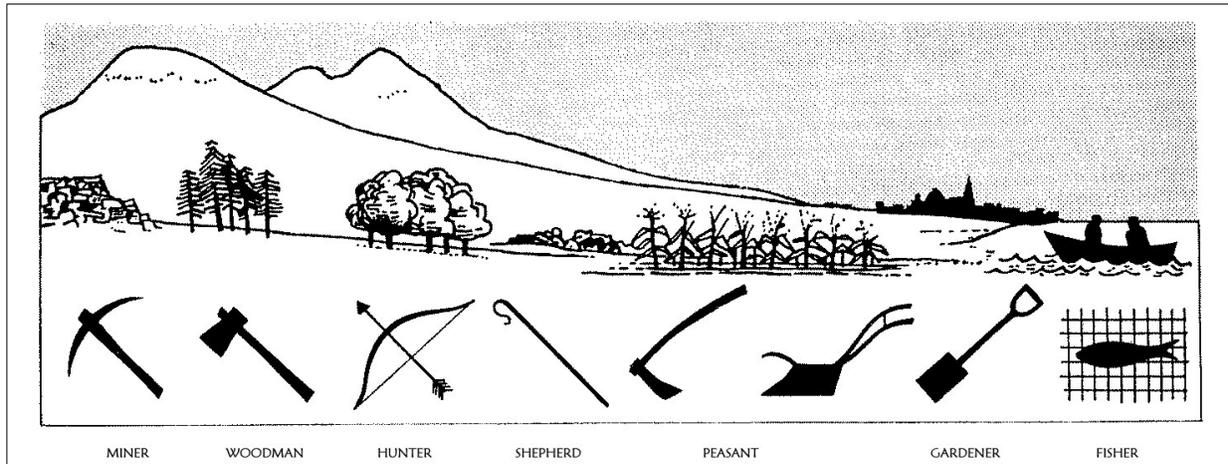
B — The student came to most classes. They came to class with some readings prepared in advance. They listened carefully and took notes. For their four reading responses, their selection of quotations (and their commentary or suggestions for discussion) demonstrate reading but that showed signs of rushed reading and vague inklings of its relevance to further inquiry. For the four module papers, they presented a collection of primary and secondary sources that were oriented cogently toward a chosen topic; that represented course authors' views but with some distortion of key concepts; and that demonstrated their understanding of media theory and its imbrication with architectural practice, with some synthesis of such theory with original research and thought.

C — The student missed four or more classes. They came to class with few readings prepared in advance. They seem distracted by laptops or distanced from class discussions. For their four reading responses, their selection of quotations (and their commentary or suggestions for discussion) demonstrate some reading but showed signs of rushed reading and no inkling of its relevance to further inquiry. For the four module papers, they presented a collection of primary and secondary sources that were not oriented cogently toward a specific topic; that misrepresented course authors' views to some extent; and that lacked clear demonstration of their understanding of media theory and its imbrication with architectural practice because of a lack cogent synthesis of such theory with original research and thought.

D — The student missed four or more classes. There was little evidence that they prepared readings in advance. They seem distracted by laptops or distanced from class discussions. For their four reading responses, their selection of quotations (and their commentary or suggestions for discussion) showed consistent signs of rushed reading and no inkling of its relevance to further inquiry. For the four module papers, they presented a collection of primary and secondary sources that were not oriented cogently toward a specific topic; that misrepresented course authors' views; and that lacked clear demonstration of their understanding of media theory and its imbrication with architectural practice because of marked lack of cogent synthesis of such theory with original research and thought. Little evidence of learning.

F — (No course credit). The student missed five or more classes without excuse. There was no evidence that readings were prepared in advance. They seem distracted by laptops or distanced from class discussions. For their four reading responses, their selection of quotations (and their commentary or suggestions for discussion) showed consistent signs of faked reading and casual reference to unrelated current events; they may have failed to hand in one or more readings responses. For the four module papers, they presented a collection of primary and secondary sources that were not oriented cogently toward class material; that misrepresented course authors' views; and that lacked evidence that they had even considered how media theory has become imbricated with architectural practice. No evidence of learning.

MODULE 1 — Environmental Mediators — WEEK 1 — Carboniferous Capitalism



The ideal valley section, after Patrick Geddes, 1909; see Mumford 1934, pp. 61-64.

Required Reading

MON. Introduction [ No Reading ]

WED. Lewis Mumford, excerpts from *Technics and Civilization*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1934] 2010).

Graduate Theory Texts

WED. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987 [1980]), very short selection provided in on Stellar. Our first encounter with the concept of the “anexact” and some quick takes on nomad art.

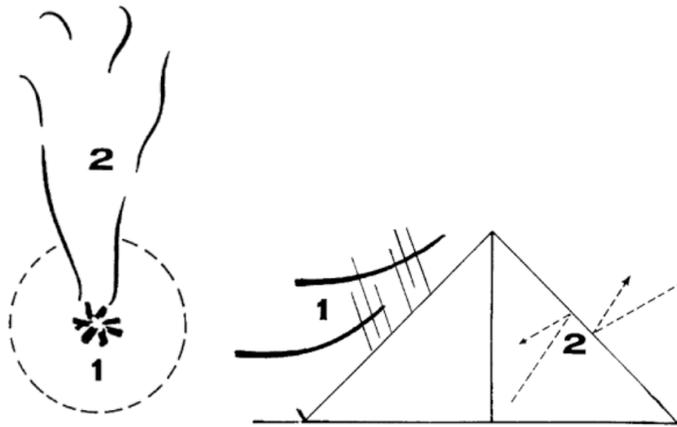
Graduate Art and Architecture Reading

WED. Wu Hung, “The Age of Ritual Art,” chapter in *Monumentality in Ancient Chinese Art and Architecture*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 17-74. This text helps flesh out Mumford’s interest in metallurgy by connecting that art to sovereignty through a beautiful analysis of the semiotic materiality of *li qi*. See highlights for key passages.

Primary Sources

Georgius Agricola, *De Re Metallica*, trans. Herbert Clark Hoover and Lou Henry Hoover, (New York: Dover, 1950 [1556]). This is Mumford’s key primary source on early modern metallurgy. Peruse.

Lewis Mumford’s TV Special, “[Lewis Mumford on the City](#),” from 1963 - courtesy of the National Film Board of Canada.



### Required Reading

*MON.* Reyner Banham, excerpts from *The Architecture of the Well-tempered Environment*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1969] 1984).

*WED.* R. Murray Schafer, excerpts from *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*, (Rochester: Destiny, 1977).

### Graduate Art and Architecture Reading

*MON.* Reinhold Martin, “Environment, c. 1973,” *Grey Room*, 14, (Winter 2004): pp. 78-101. For those of you interested in where Banham fits in recent scholarly discussion of the environment in the late 1960s early 1970s. I won’t get into this here because we read Martin thoroughly in Module 3.

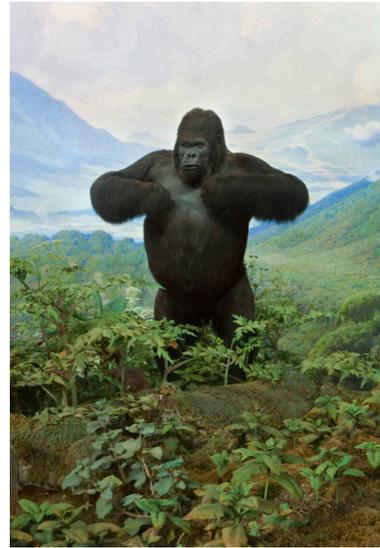
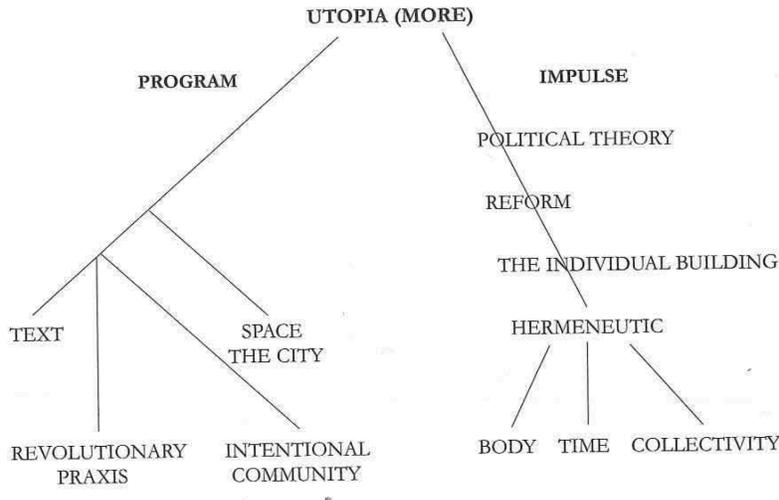
*WED.* Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustic and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002). A detailed work discussed at length in the lecture, of interest for those curious about the technical details of the math and physics of electronic sound recording and reverb modeling.

*WED.* Tomoyuki Okada, “Youth Culture and the Shaping of Japanese Mobile Media: Personalization and the *Ketai* Internet as Multimedia,” in *Personal, Portable, Perdestrian: Mobile Phone in Japanese Life*, ed. Mizuko Ito, et al., (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005). This fabulous ethnography is a bit of a tangent. It is part of the mobility studies branch of sound studies and will be of interest to those seeking relevance for Schafer in critiques of contemporary mobile media and urban space.

### Primary Sources

*WED.* See Stellar site for link to Dropbox folder of .m4a file for Schafer’s early 1970s field recordings.

MODULE 1— Environmental Mediators — WEEK 3 — Eco-Feminist World Building



Required Reading

TUE. Ursula K. LeGuin, *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia*, (New York: Harper&Row, 1974).

WED. Donna Haraway, excerpts from *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and the Natural World of Modern Science*, (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 26-58.

Graduate Theory Reading

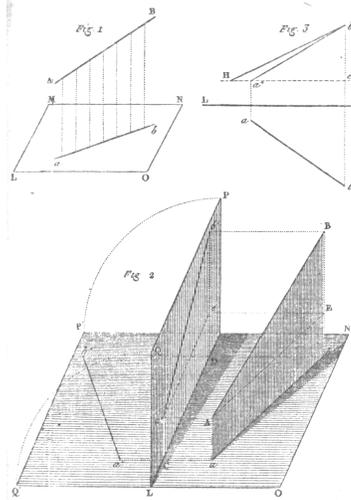
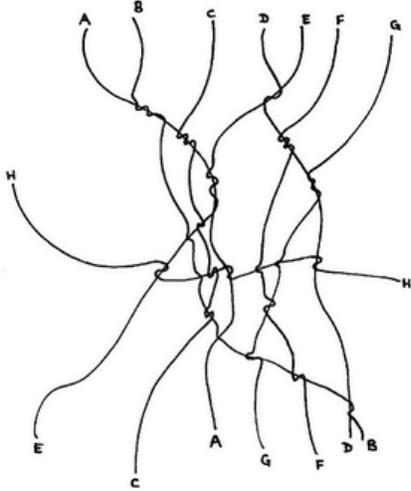
TUE. Frederic Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*, (London: Verso, 2009), selections on LeGuin pertaining to the above diagram of the Utopian imaginary.

TUE. Susan Buck-Morse, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), selections on Russian Constructivism and the productive distance of models from actualization.

WED. Bruno Latour, "Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Forest," chapter in *Pandora's Hope*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 24-79. A lengthy study that will help us gain some distance from Ingold's love of the formal opposition between girds and wander-lines. See pp. 68-73 for the core of the discussion of hylomorphism, i.e., chains of form-matter mediations.

WED. Evelyn Fox Keller, *Making Sense of Life: Explaining Biological Development with Models, Metaphors, and Machines*, (Cambridge: Harvard, 2002). Introduction and Chapter 2, 3, and 5, "Taming the Cybernetic Metaphor." These chapters give us a solid definition of a "model" and get two feet on the ground when discussion key terms, such "development," "emergence," and "form."

MODULE 1— Environmental Mediators — WEEK 4 — Primitivist Ontology



Required Reading

MON. Tim Ingold, excerpts from *Lines: A Brief History*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 72-103.

WED. Michel Serres, “What Thales Saw...,” in *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1984), pp. 84-97.

WED. Bernhard Seigert, *Cultural Techniques: Grids, Filters, Doors, and Other Articulations of the Real*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop Young, (New York: Fordham, 2015), “Grids” and “Water Lines.”

Graduate Theory Reading

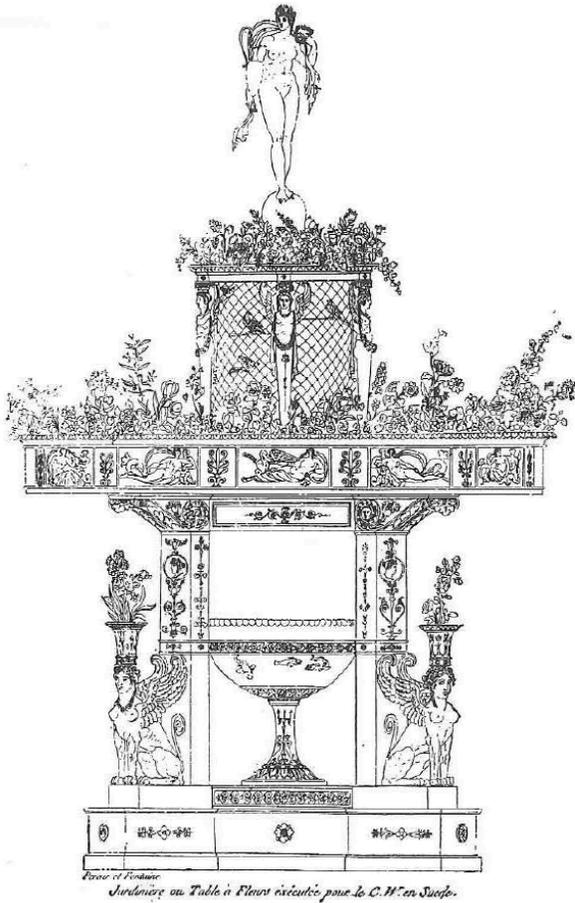
MON. Gary Tomlinson, *A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity*, (New York: Zone, 2018), pp. 11-88.

MON. André Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, trans., Anna Bostock Berger, intro. Randall White, (New York: October Books, 1993 [1964]) (For an important section on “functional aesthetics” and “rhythm” (which will be important for Tomlinson and Derrida, below), see pp. 299-313. This is only for those who want to read the passages from the primary text that Tomlinson draws upon.

WED. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1974 [1967]). Chapters 1 and 3 (see especially pp. 74-87) cover Derrida’s engagement with cybernetics and the anthropology of Leroi-Gourhan.

WED. Jacques Derrida, *Edmund Husserl’s Origin of Geometry, An Introduction*, trans. John P. Leavy, Jr., (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 1978 [1962]). Sections V – X (pp. 66-141). Derrida defines his concepts of the “anexact” and the “model,” which are core for Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari when engaging Husserl, Derrida, and Mumford through Mumford’s concept of “The Machine” (WEEK 1, first course lecture).

MODULE 2 — Rebuilding Thinking — WEEK 5 — Mechanization and Ornament



Required Readings

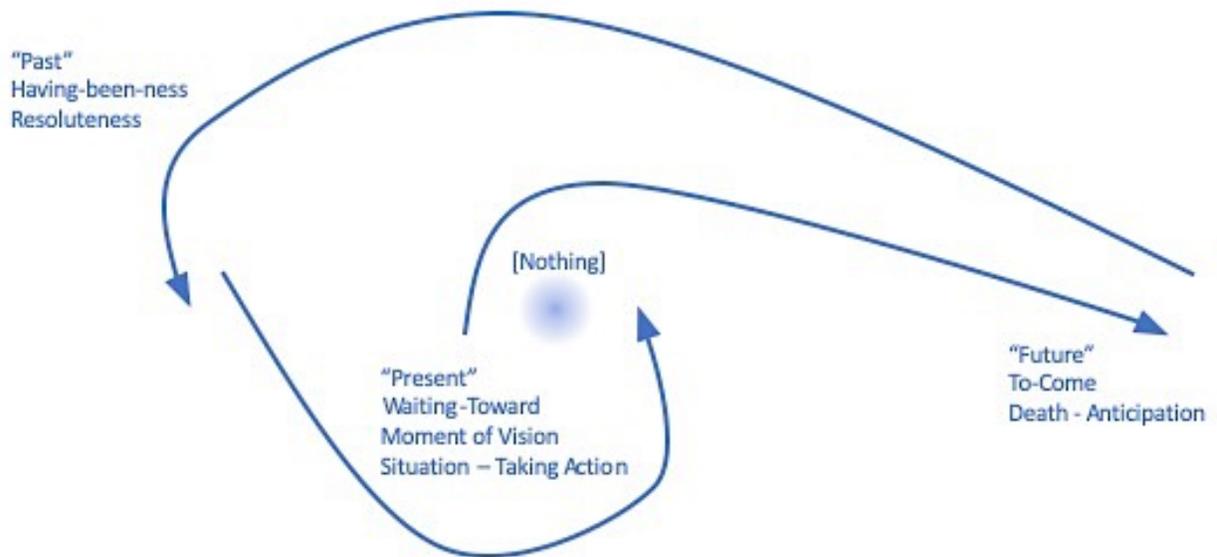
MON. Sigfried Giedion, excerpts from *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

WED. Rubén Gallo, excerpts from *Mexican Modernity: The Avant-Garde and the Technological Revolution*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

Graduate Theory Reading

WED. Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer and Chris Cullens, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). See especially “Mother’s Mouth” and “The Great Lalula” for Kittler’s core argument about the transition away from the Romantic discourse network and into the discourse network defined by “technological media.” These sections also contain references to the archival material in the history of disability studies that has since been revisited and undergone significant reinterpretation in the work by Jonathan Crary, Jonathan Sterne, and Mara Mills.

The Structure of Ecstatic Temporality

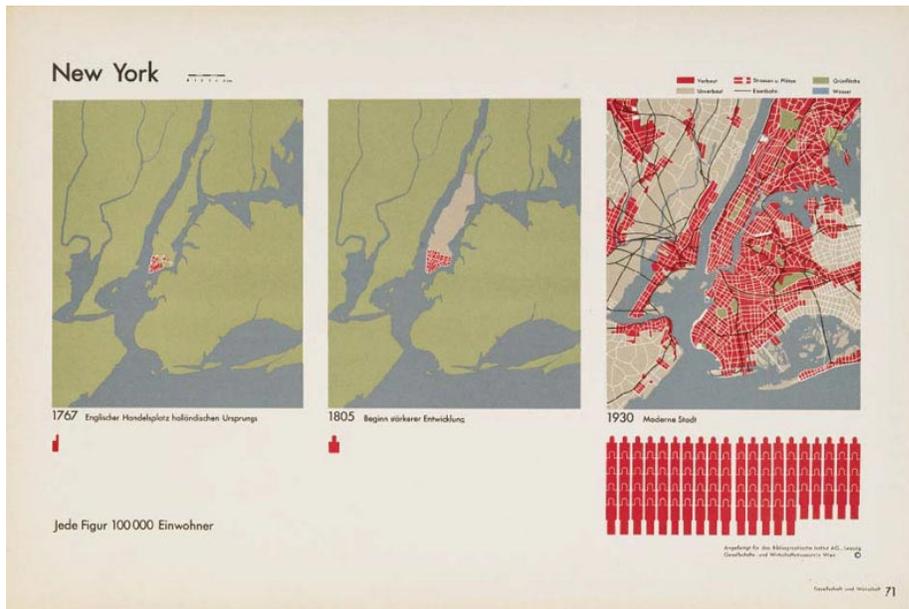


Required Reading

MON. Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking" [excerpt from *Poetry Language Thought*], in *Basic Writings*, trans. Albert Hofstadter, ed. David Farrell Krell, (New York: Harper Collins, 1993 [1954]), pp. 347-363.

WED. Hannah Arendt, "The Public and the Private Realm" [excerpt from *The Human Condition*], in *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, (New York: Penguin, 2000 [1958]), pp. 182-217.

## MODULE 2 — Rebuilding Thinking — WEEK 7 — Mobilization and Rebuilding



### Required Reading

*MON.* Zeynep Çelik Alexander, excerpts from *Kinaesthetic Knowing: Aesthetics, Epistemology, Modern Design*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

*WED.* Peter Gallison, “Aufbau/Bauhaus: Logical Positivism and Architectural Modernism”, *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 16, no. 4, (Summer 1990): pp. 709-752.

### Primary Sources

*WED.* LeCorbusier, “Eyes Which Do Not See”, in *Toward an Architecture*, trans. John Goodman, (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2007 [1928]), pp. 145-192.

*WED.* Paul Scheerbart, *The Development of Aerial Militarism and the Demobilization of European Ground Forces, Fortresses, and Naval Fleets*, trans. M. Kasper, (Brooklyn: Ugly Duckling, 2007 [1909].)

WEEK 8 / [ Spring Break , No Class ]

MODULE 3 — Cybernetic Architecture — WEEK 9 — The Cybernetic Surround



Required Reading

MON. Reinhold Martin, excerpts from *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media, and Corporate Space*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), sections on offices and tech parks.

WED. Beatriz Colomina, “Enclosed by Images: The Eameses’ Multimedia Architecture”, *Grey Room*, no. 2, (Winter 2001): pp. 6-29.

Graduate Art and Architecture Readings

MON. Paul N. Edwards, excerpts from *The Closed World: Computers and the Politics of Discourse in Cold War America*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), sections on SAGE missile defense bunkers.

WED. Isabelle Moffat, “‘A Horror of Abstract Thought’: Postwar Britain and Hamilton’s 1951 *Growth and Form* Exhibition,” *October*, vol. 94, (Autumn 2000): pp. 89-112.

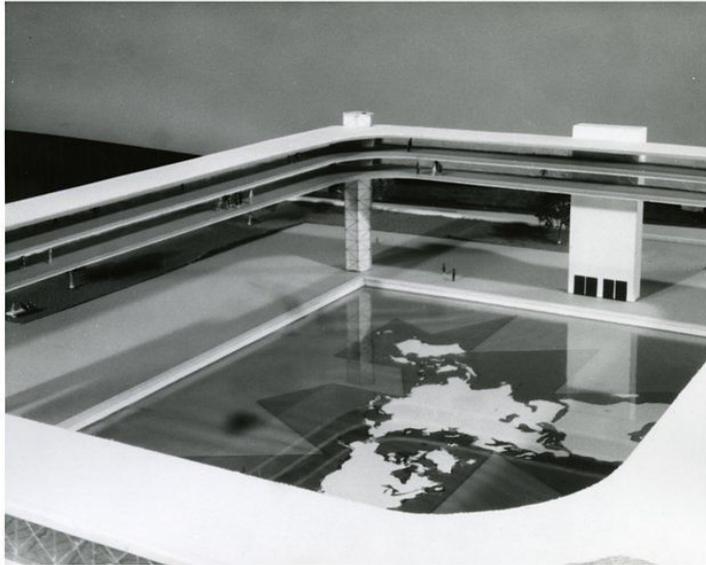
WED. Yuriko Furuhashi, “Multimedia Environments and Security Operations: Expo ’70 as a Laboratory of Governance,” *Grey Room*, no. 54, (Winter 2014): pp. 56-79.

WED. Fred Turner, “*The Family of Man* and the Politics of Attention in Cold War America,” *Public Culture*, vol. 24, no. 1, (2012): pp. 55-84.

Primary Sources

Carson Chan, et al., eds., *Richard Hamilton & Sigfried Giedion: Reaper*, (Ringier, 2017).

MODULE 3 — Cybernetic Architecture — WEEK 10 — Whole Systems Thinking



Required Reading

MON. R. Buckminster Fuller, “The Prospects of Humanity: 1965-1985”, *Ekistics*, vol. 18, no. 107, (October 1964): pp. 232-242.

MON. Marshall McLuhan, “The Relation of the Environment to the Anti-Environment” [1966], in *Aesthetics Contemporary*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz, (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1978).

WED. Mark Wigely, “Network Fever,” *Grey Room*, (Summer 2001): pp. 82-122.

Graduate Theory Readings

MON. R. Buckminster Fuller, *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*, (Zurich: Lars Müller, 2008 [1969]).

MON. Marshal McLuhan, *War and Peace in the Global Village*, (Ginko Press, 2001 [1968]).

MON. John Durham Peters, *The Marvelous Clouds: Toward a Philosophy of Elemental Media*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

Graduate Art and Architecture

WED. Yuri Furuhashi, “Architecture as Atmospheric Media: Tange Lab and Cybernetics,” in *Media Theory in Japan*., eds. Marc Steinberg and Alexander Zahlten. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017, 52-79.

WED. Ginger Nolan, *The Neocolonialism of the Global Village*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.)



### Required Reading

*MON.* Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, “The Fun Palace”, *The Drama Review*, vol. 12, no. 3, (Spring 1968), pp. 127-134.

*WED.* Frederic Jameson, “Postmodernism and the City” and Robert Venturi, “The Duck and the Decorated Shed”, in *Postmodernism: A Reader*, ed. Thomas Docherty, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 80-92, 295-307.

### Graduate Theory Readings

*MON.* Pickering, excerpts from *The Cybernetic Brain: Sketches of Another Future*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), selections on Gordon Pask and “ontological theatre.”

### Graduate Art and Architecture Readings

*WED.* Erica Robles-Anderson, “The Crystal Cathedral: Architecture and Mediated Congregation,” *Public Culture*, vol. 24, no. 3, (2012): pp. 577-599.

*WED.* Angela M Blake, “An Audible Sense of Order: Race, Fear, and CB Radio on Los Angeles Freeways in the 1970s,” in *Sound in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, eds. David Suisman and Susan Strasser, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. 159-283.

*WED.* Art M. Blake, “Audible Citizenship and Automobility: Race, Technology, and CB Radio,” *American Quarterly*, vol. 63, no. 3, *Sound Clash: Listening to American Studies*, (September 2011): pp. 531-553.

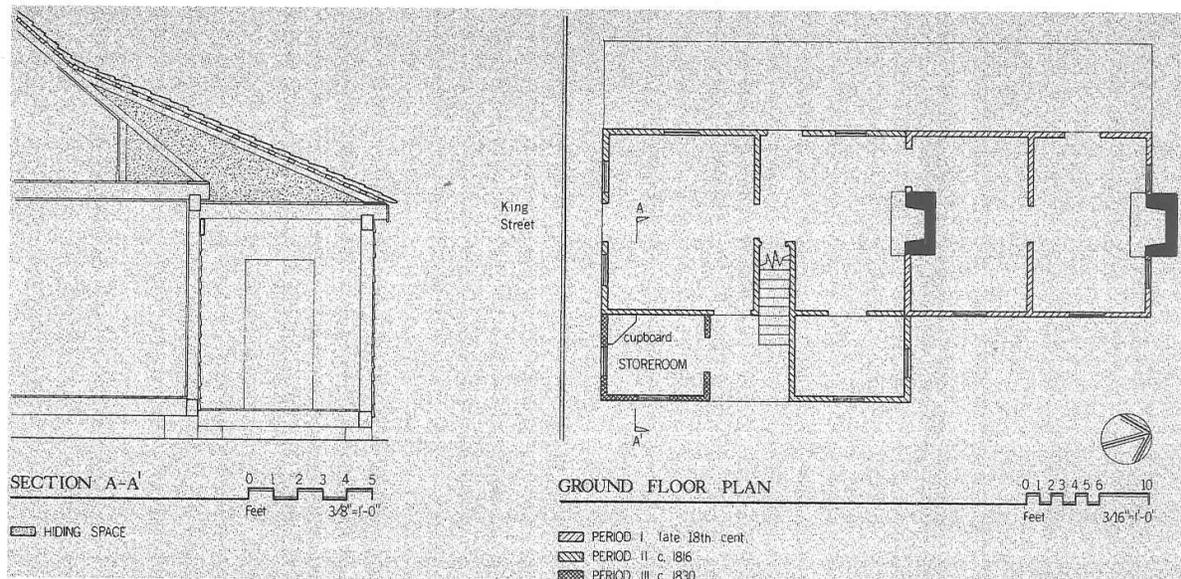


Figure 1. Reconstruction to scale of Harriet Jacobs's hiding place. Drawing by Carl R. Lounsbury. Reproduced with permission.

### Required Reading

MON. [ Patriot's Day ]

WED. Harriet Jacobs, excerpts from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990 [1861]).

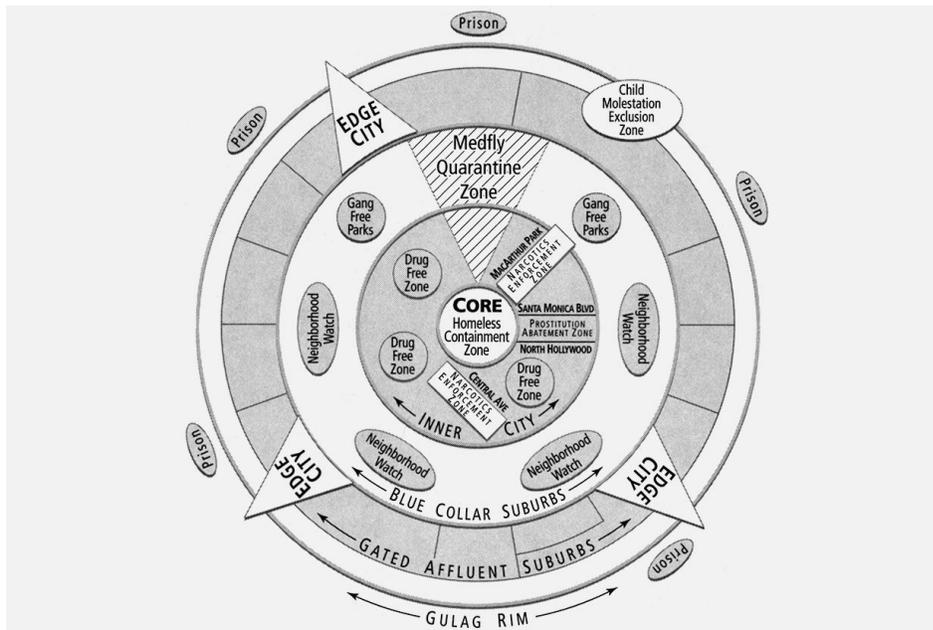
WED. Saidiya V. Hartman, excerpts from *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-making in Nineteenth-century America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), sections on "inroads of discipline."

### Graduate Theory Readings

WED. Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics*, vol. 17, no. 2, *Culture and Countermemory: The "American" Connection*, (Summer 1987): pp. 64-81.

WED. Sylvia Wynter, "1492: A New World View," *Race, Discourse, and the Origins of the Americas: A New World View*, eds. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994).

MODULE 4 — Containment and Insurgency — WEEK 13 — Mapping Resistance



Reading Responsibility

MON. Michel Foucault, excerpts from *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (New York: Sheridan, 1995 [1975]), sections on disease control and training.

WED. Guy Debord et al., excerpts from *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. Ken Knabb, (Berkeley, CA: 1981), pp. 5-14, 50-54, 343-352.

WED. Steve Goodman, excerpts from *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), pp. xiv-xx, 63-67, 75-79, 109-112.

Graduate Art and Architecture Readings

WED. Jennifer Light, excerpts from *The Nature of Cities: Ecological Visions and the American Urban Professions, 1920-1960*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2009), selections on the diagrams used to compose the “Ecology of Fear” by Mike Davis.

WED. Jennifer Light, excerpts from *From Warfare to Welfare: Defense Intellectuals and Urban Problems in Cold War America*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2003), selections on portable video and coaxial cable.

WED. Mike Davis, excerpts from *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster*, (New York: Verso, 2020 [1998]).

WED. Mike Davis, excerpts from *Planet of Slums*, (New York: Verso, 2017 [2006]).

MODULE 4 — Containment and Insurgency — WEEK 14 — Neutralization



Required Reading

*MON.* Allen Feldman, excerpts from *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

*WED.* Eyal Weizman, excerpts from *Hollow Lands: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, (New York: Verso, 2012).

Graduate Art and Architecture Readings

*WED.* Helga Tawil-Souri, "Cellular Borders: Dis/Connecting Phone Calles in Israel Palestine," in Parks, L. and Starosielski, N. eds., *Signal traffic: Critical studies of media infrastructures*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), pp. 158-180.

WEEK 15 / *MON.* [ No Reading ] Review and Discussion.

## Graduate Addendum

I have prepared this addendum to give you carefully devised groupings of selections from major theoretical works that map onto key art and architecture archives. Graduate students are required to meet with me to discuss focused readings of some significant portion these texts. By “significant,” I do not mean quantity of pages but rather depth of reading and sustained reflection.

In lectures, I will draw up on key examples (i.e., diagrams and buildings) mentioned in these texts, while also explaining how concepts follow from and work with those examples. For undergraduates, once you choose to focus in on a particular concept, theme, or archive from a given module, these texts may also serve as source material. I have anticipated vectors of thought that you may wish to deepen with further reading.

The texts that follow are not given in the proper alphabetical order of a bibliography. Instead, they track the buildup of ideas that we undertake in the course: from media ecology as in pertains to the crafting practices of nonmodern cultures; through media theories of colonialism as shaped by modern methods of construction and observation; architects as key actors in the transformation of computational media into models of ideal users; and, finally, the contemporary infrastructure of waning sovereignty and boarder control. I will also provide copies of recent art-architecture publications, for each module, in the Stellar “Graduate Addendum” folder.

---

André Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, trans., Anna Bostock Berger, intro. Randall White, (New York: October Books, 1993 [1964]) (For an important section on “functional aesthetics” and “rhythm” (which will be important for Tomlinson and Derrida, below), see pp. 299-313.

Jacques Derrida, *Edmund Husserl’s Origin of Geometry, An Introduction*, trans. John P. Leavy, Jr., (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 1978 [1962]). Sections V – X (pp. 66-141). This is the longest and most challenging selection on the list but will be very rewarding for anyone interested in how to think historically using phenomenology. Derrida defines his concepts of the “anexact” and the “model,” which are core for Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari engaging Husserl, Derrida, and Mumford through Mumford’s concept of “The Machine” (WEEK 1, first course lecture).

\_\_\_\_\_, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1974 [1967]). Chapters 1 and 3 (pp. 74-87) cover Derrida’s engagement with cybernetics and the anthropology of Leroi-Gourhan.

Cornelia Vismann, “Cultural Techniques and Sovereignty,” *Theory, Culture, and Society*, vol. 30, no. 6, (2013): pp. 83-93. The most lucid and concise essay on the concept of “cultural techniques” ever written. Highly recommended. See especially section on the plough.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987 [1980]). See chapter on “The War Machine,” especially pp. 367-368, 427-429, for the “anexact” and “The Machine.”

Gary Tomlinson, *A Million Years of Music*, (New York: Zone, 2018). Chapters 1 – 3 will get you further thoughts on Mumford’s concept of “The Machine” and enlightening reference to Tim Ingold and Jacques Derrida.

Bernhard Siegert, *Cultural Techniques: Grids, Filters, Doors, and Other Articulations of the Real*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, (New York: Fordham, 2015). See especially Chapter 6 and Chapter 8, which both challenge formerly canonical interpretations of the “grid” and “science” as uncontroversial markers of modernity.

Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer and Chris Cullens, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). See especially “Mother’s Mouth” and “The Great Lalula” for Kittler’s core argument about the transition away from the Romantic discourse network and into the discourse network defined by “technological media.” These sections also contain references to the archival material in the history of disability studies that has since been revisited and undergone significant reinterpretation in the work by Jonathan Crary, Jonathan Sterne, and Mara Mills.

Zeynep Çelik Alexander, *Kinaesthetic Knowing: Aesthetics, Epistemology, Modern Design*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017). See introduction. A recent work essential for students interested in the historical arc from psychophysics to cybernetics, linking Modules 1 and 2. Also contains important intellectual history of psychophysics that is an important revision to the device-centric analysis of that movement found in Kittler and Crary. Will be of interest to those who want to pursue more readings in the vein of the Galison piece on logical positivism.

Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, (New York: Routledge, 1991). See less frequently read Chapters 1, 3 and 4. These continue the critique of evolutionary theory begun in *Primate Visions*, linking both to the discussion of cybernetics.

Evelyn Fox Keller, *Making Sense of Life: Explaining Biological Development with Models, Metaphors, and Machines*, (Cambridge: Harvard, 2002). Introduction and Chapter 5, “Taming the Cybernetic Metaphor.” For students interested in the history and philosophy of science, Keller can link you to that field in this reading of Turning’s work on synthetic biology. If this is your path—perhaps you are interested in the architecture of laboratories and 1960s cybernetics in computer history—ask me about the connection of her work to that of Hans-Jörg Rheinberger: an author who will help you get even more out of your reading or Derrida.

Sylvia Wynter, “1492: A New World View,” *Race, Discourse, and the Origins of the Americas: A New World View*, eds. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994). A lengthy essay connecting us back to Seigert’s writings on the architectural significance of drafting and positioning techniques. Wynter also cites authors connected to the cybernetics story in this essay, creating opportunity to build dialogue between black studies and media history. Ask me for details of how that is happening outside the academy, too.

Hortense J. Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” *Diacritics*, vol. 17, no. 2, Culture and Countermemory: The “American” Connection, (Summer 1987): pp. 64-81. A dense essay that you will revisit again and again. Will help you connect Derrida to the history of medicine. Ask me for more details on the work of Alondra Nelson if you are curious about connecting your work to public health and urbanism through African American history and the history of cybernetics.

Helga Tawil-Souri, “Cellular Borders: Dis/Connecting Phone Calles in Israel Palestine,” in Parks, L. and Starosielski, N. eds., *Signal traffic: Critical studies of media infrastructures*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), pp. 158-180. An important text that will ground Weizman’s grand conceptual gestures in ethnographic work with Palestinians.