

CourseNo: ARCHA4515_001_2012_3
Meeting Location: AVERY HALL 412
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Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

A4515: Experiments in Motion, I. Networks

Fall 2012

**Professor Kazys Varnelis
Lectures/Seminars Friday 11-1**

Description

As part of the Experiments in Motion collaboration between the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation and Audi AG, this seminar seeks an understanding of the relationship of mobility and networks.

Networks and mobility have always been linked. So long as there have been people, individuals have been driven to connect with each other to communicate thoughts and to exchange things. Transportation and communication are two reflections of the need to overcome the distance between us. The pre-modern city is the product of the first great intensification of mobility, produced by the explosion in trade and knowledge made possible by the invention of writing, the wheel, and the sailboat in Mesopotamia. With the development of modern postal systems, the telegraph, and the telephone, as well as the invention of trains, steamships, and automobiles in the nineteenth century, the city intensified to an entirely different energy level, producing the modern metropolis.

After a century of relatively stable intensification, we are now again experiencing a phase-shift as the Internet and mobile telecommunications devices are reframing mobility. The last two decades have sent us hurtling headlong into a new age in which our lives, more than ever, trace trajectories over networks. We live in a network culture that we urgently need to understand.

The seminar is organized as a history of the contemporary, tracing a genealogy of present-day culture and extrapolating possible trajectories into the future. We will explore how mobility and networks are not merely technologies with social ramifications but rather are cultural dominants connecting changes in science, society, economy, aesthetics, urbanism, and ideology.

Requirements

Participation: 20%

Each class will consist of a presentation by the instructor on selected themes, followed by an in-depth discussion in seminar. Students are expected to prepare all readings in order to facilitate a discussion in which all students participate. Active participation by all students in each session is required.

Tumblr: 20%

Each student is expected to maintain a tumblelog on tumblr.com and to post at least twice a week. Beyond mere reblogging of information pertinent to the course, the tumblelog will form a record and commentary upon their research during the semester.

Project: Media Object and Critical Essay: 60%

During the first month of the semester, GSAPP and Audi will be choosing a hypothesis on the future of cities and mobility for investigation during the upcoming year. Students will split into groups tasked with critically investigating an aspect of the hypothesis through a dialogic encounter with at least one other thinker that they identify, preferably a faculty member at Columbia University. This critical essay should be no less than 2,000 words long (roughly 10 pages double spaced, 12 points) and footnoted in accordance with the Chicago humanities footnote method of citation.

For the media object, students will produce a high-quality video, at least five minutes in length. This should include a video interview with the thinker that the students are engaged in a dialogic encounter as well as original B roll footage and graphics integrated using Adobe After Effects. As the goal is to put the media object on the Web, it must not include any footage for which students have not obtained rights.

A production workshop will take place on the 26th of October, but there will be tutorials beforehand.

Plagiarism of any sort will result in immediate failure.

Reading

All readings will be available on-line.

Introduction

- 01 09.07 Background reading: David Harvey, "Fordism" and "From Fordism to Flexible Accumulation," in *The Condition of Postmodernity*, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1989), 125-172.

An Overview of Networks

- 02 09.14 Manuel Castells, "Informationalism, Networks, and the Network Society: A Theoretical Blueprint. In Castells, ed. *The Network Society: A Cross-cultural Perspective* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2004), 3-45.
- Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies," *Negotiations, 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 177-182.
- Kazys Varnelis, "Conclusion: The Meaning of Network Culture," *Networked Publics*, 145-163.

Network Theory

Albert-László Barabási, "Six Degrees of Separation," "Small Worlds," and "Hubs and Connectors," *Linked: The New Science of Networks* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus, 2002), 25-63.

- 03 09.21 Nicholas Carr, "From the Many to the Few" *The Big Switch: Rewiring the World from Edison to Google* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 127-149.

Optional:

Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (May 1973), 1360-1380.

Duncan J. Watts, "The Connected Age," *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 19-42.

Mobility

Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 91-110.

- 04 09.28 Michael Bull, "'To each their own bubble': Mobile Spaces of Sound in the City," in Nick Couldry and Anna McCarthy eds., *MediaSpace* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 275-292.

Martin Dodge and Rob Kitchen, "Code and the Transduction of Life," *Journal of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 1 (2005): 1 62-80.

Mark Shepard, "Toward the Sentient City" In Shepard, Ed., *Sentient City: Ubiquitous Computing, Architecture, and the Future of Urban Space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011): 16-37.

Time

Jean Baudrillard, "The End of the Millennium or the Countdown," *Economy & Society* 26 (1997): 447-55.

- 05 10.05 Bruce Sterling, "Atemporality for the Creative Artist,"
<http://www.transmediale.de/en/keynote-bruce-sterling-us-atemporality>

transcribed:

http://www.wired.com/beyond_the_beyond/2010/02/atemporality-for-the-creative-artist/

Space

Michel Foucault, "Docile Bodies," *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 135-156.

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, "Capitalist Sovereignty, Or Administering the Global Society of Control," *Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 325-350.

- 06 10.12 Marc Augé, "Prologue" and "From Places to Non-Places," in *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, (London; New York: Verso, 1995), 1-6. 75-115.

Hans Ibelings, "Supermodernism," *Supermodernism* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 1998), 55-102.

Optional:

Kazys Varnelis and Marc Tuters, "Beyond Locative Media: Giving Shape to the Internet of Things," *Leonardo* 39, No. 4 (2006): 357-363.

Subjectivity

Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," *On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. David Levine, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 324-339.

Kenneth J. Gergen, "Social Saturation and the Populated Self," *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 48-80.

- 07 10.19 Brian Holmes, "The Flexible Personality. For a New Cultural Critique," *Transversal*, <http://transform.eipcp.net/transversal/1106/holmes/en>

Jeffrey Nealon, "Once More, With Intensity, Foucault's History of Power Revisited," *Foucault Beyond Foucault*, 24-53.

Warren Neidich, "From Noopower to Neuropower: How Mind Becomes Matter," *Cognitive Architecture: From Bio-politics to Noo-politics; Architecture & Mind in the Age of Communication and Information* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2010), 538-581.

- 08 10.26 **Video Production Workshop**

Complexity

- Joseph A. Tainter, "Introduction to Collapse," *The Collapse of Complex Societies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1-21.
- 09 11.02 Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1977), 13-32.
- Charles Perrow, "Normal Accident at Three Mile Island." *Society* 18, no. 5 (1981): 17-26.

Control

- Richard Barbrook and Andy Cameron, "The Californian Ideology," <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/theory-californianideology-main.html>.
- Saskia Sassen, "Electronic space and power," *Journal of Urban Technology* 4 (1997): 1-17.
- Alexander R. Galloway, "Physical Media," *Protocol: How Control Exists after Decentralization*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 29-53.
- 10 11.09 Optional:
- Saskia Sassen, "On Concentration and Centrality in the Global City," Paul L. Knox and Peter J. Taylor, eds., *World Cities in a World-System* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 63-78.
- Stephen Graham, "Communication Grids: Cities and Infrastructure," in Saskia Sassen, *Global Networks. Linked Cities* (London: Routledge, 2002), 71-92.
- Kevin Phillips, "Preface," "Introduction. The Panic of August," "Finance: The New Real Economy?" *Bad Money*. (New York: Penguin, 2009), xi-lxxiv and 1-68.

Urban Form

- Rob Kling, Spencer Olin, and Mark Poster, "Beyond the Edge: The Dynamism of Postsuburban Regions," and "The Emergence of Postsuburbia: An Introduction," Kling, Olin, and Poster, eds. *Postsuburban California: The Transformation of Orange County* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), vii-xx, 1-30.
- 11 11.16 Selections from Michael J. Weiss, *The Clustered World: How We Live, What We Buy, and What it All Means About Who We Are* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1999).
- Robert E. Lang and Jennifer LeFurgy, "Edgeless Cities: Examining the Noncentered Metropolis," *Housing Policy Debate* 14 (2003): 427-460.
- 12 11.23 Thanksgiving

13 11.30 **Conclusion, Video Presentation**

syllabus