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# ATLAS

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## MODULE 01: ATLAS

While you might think of an Atlas as a straightforward “collection of maps in a volume” that objectively delineate the landforms of this Earth, the earliest Atlases (like Mercator’s from 1595) were more speculative – filled with luscious imagery and annotations that describe field conditions and observations of city-states, surrounded by engravings of monsters and myths, fauna and flora.<sup>01</sup> Mercator (and many others) made dense maps as works of art and world-building.

In ARCH 415 this Fall quarter, you will create an Atlas.

Your Atlas is a collection of maps and drawings that dutifully (and beautifully!) delineate the contemporary social, cultural, economic, etc, etc, landscapes of this country in all its beauty and turmoil. Reveal the human condition: what does it mean to be human? Document post-industrial rust-belt rewilding. Merge time and space on 3 axes. Which way – and when – do seasonal migrations pass? Map the nuclear clouds and synthetic manufactured atmospheres. What can we learn about agricultural land-use in this new millennium? Who, what, and where defines our methane footprint? Etcetera, etcetera, etc.

The goal for your Atlas is to draw out and visualize timely, topical, contextual, and provocative background knowledge that addresses the pedagogical aim of the Superstudio and its inherent goals of decarbonization, justice, and jobs.<sup>02</sup> The Atlas should position you to make a convincing and grounded project proposal at midterm. Your Atlas should fundamentally be your own work and voice the narrative that you want to tell going forward. Design prompts will be shared throughout the quarter for inclusion in your Atlas. These are Eidetic Images, Core Samples, and Mappings. However, these are a launch ramp, a kick-off, a point of departure only. Your Atlas requires additional creative work that rounds out your own narrative.

It is imperative that you seek out and find subjects of interest that excite you, and for you to bring them into the pages of your Atlas. Translate this passion into luscious drawings, dense investigations, radical positions, dramatic reveals, arguments, and rough ideas. It is a substantial reference, collection, and summary of your intentions; and contains both your provocations and reactions.

Through the first days of the quarter, consider what form your Atlas might take overall. You will set the tone, define the scope, and ultimately give it meaning through the creative works inside. It must work as a “whole” while at the same time, revealing new truths with every turn of the page. Evaluation of your Atlas will be based upon:

- A) quality of research process
- B) quality of graphic development
- C) quality and relevance of proposed operative project.

01 \_ <https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbc.2003rosen0730/?st=gallery>

02 \_ <https://www.lafoundation.org/take-action/green-new-deal/superstudio>

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## PROMPT 1: EIDETIC IMAGES

Please read “Eidetic Operations” by James Corner. This reading will be posted to Moodle and is also available at the link below.<sup>01</sup>

We will discuss this reading on Monday to kick-off work on your Atlas. “Eidetic Operations” discusses the history of the visualization of landscape in both drawing and built form. It argues for design and representations of a productive landscape, not merely designing and portraying something static and picturesque.

You may not be familiar or confident (yet!) drawing out or mapping landscape. This introductory prompt is meant to challenge any preconceptions about landscape as merely backdrop in one or two static dimensions. From the reading, gather how landscape is living, how landscape has agency. You must include some eidetic images in your Atlas. Throughout the quarter, work to bridge quantitative and qualitative aspects of your chosen investigations.

01 \_ [https://parksandrec3.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/corner\\_eideticoperations.pdf](https://parksandrec3.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/corner_eideticoperations.pdf)

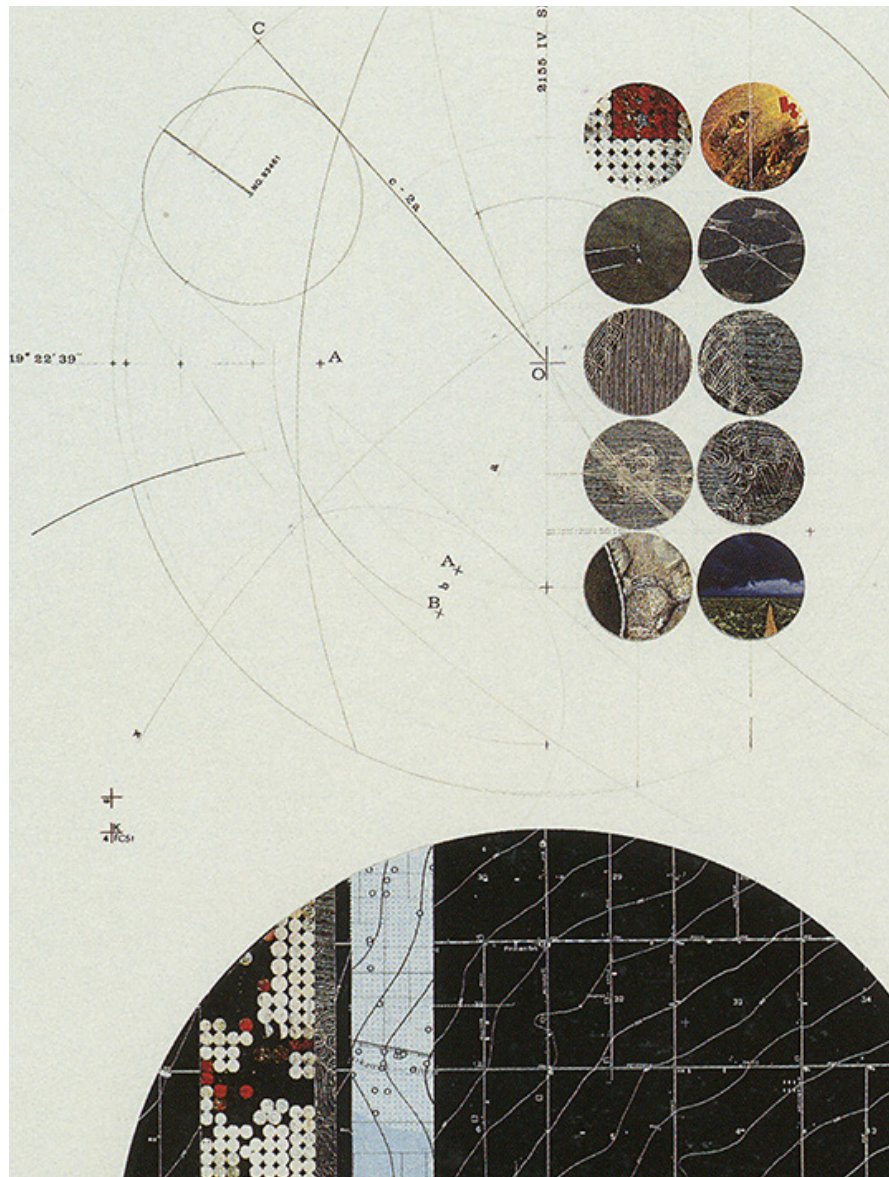
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## PROMPT 2: MAPPING MATTER & ENERGY

Maps (noun) are complicit narrative tools; they typically exist in two static dimensions. Mapping (verb) does more than simply inventory what exists. This week we are rolling out a discussion on the power of mapping to support positions, re-tell events, build consensus, reveal truth, and more. Your Atlas requires extensive mappings related to your chosen topic to understand spatial relationships, histories, futures, quantities and qualities, the human condition, and possible change.

Remember: mapping will continue beyond just this week! Specificity will make them “yours.” Flex your graphic design skills. Foreground meaning in the message. Focus on the stuff that matters. Find out where your topic has energy and chaos. Discover, recover, uncover! Maps can document far more than geographic location – push the boundaries of what can be mapped through your topic. Start five new maps between each class – we will refine and improve them as we go. We will have a short pin-up on Friday once again.

Maps supporting your topic might consider:

- different scales (national, regional, local, human, etc)
- physical landscape (rivers, geography, infrastructure, etc)
- theoretical landscape (geopolitical borders, state lines, etc)
- ephemerality and impermanence
- atmospheres and weather systems
- the sensorium (five senses)
- time as a continuum
- infinity

01 \_ <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/110/mapping>



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## UPDATE 02 - WHAT IF?

We are halfway through our Atlas module. You have all selected a range of topics that ground us within the contemporary American landscape. Through your work on:

eidetic images  
mapping  
eidetic mappings  
map-imagery

you have all revealed exchanges, relationships, workings, truths, potential, and more. The third prompt – core samples – will roll out today and ask you to scale down, take apart, and project potential from a place you have mapped that is relevant to your topic.

Your Atlas needs to visually communicate *what if?*

It is an exercise in being speculative about a future you want to comprehend, create for, and contribute to. As you work to complete your Atlas over the next two weeks, you must foreground *speculation* through all forms of visualizing – eidetic / mapping / core samples.



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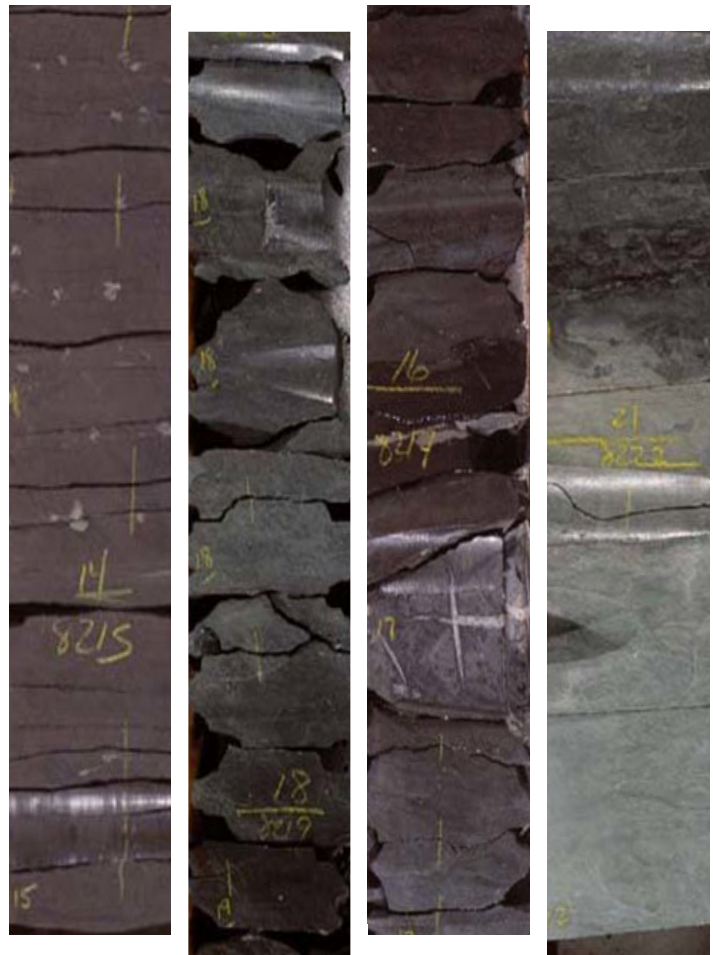
## PROMPT 3: CORE SAMPLES

A core sample is traditionally a geologists tool that takes a linear sample of the Earth's matter to read an active-history across space and time. Ice sheets are sampled to reconstruct how global temperatures have risen and fallen over thousands of years. Clay samples can be examined under microscope to discern the change in polarity of the magnetic field across time. In all, a core sample is a specific cross-section of a chosen field that reveals larger connections across space and time. Individual moments are able to tie together bigger pictures.

Your Atlas will contain core samples!

The medium through which you make, take, represent, or document "core samples" is up to you. It would be astute of you all to define: what a core sample *could be* for your project; what form(s) they may take; how they contribute to your narrative; any conceptual or aesthetic relationships to your other mediums and visualizations. Strive to reveal the inner workings of a process, system, action, behavior, or other.

- Choose a location from one of your maps to begin the process
- Core samples reveal a cross-section through space/time
- Core samples could be objects, drawings, models, or other modes
- Core samples can be a series of things or a complex singularity
- Core samples must show time as a continuum (<past><future>)
- Core samples must speculate





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## THE PROPOSAL

You have made it through the first half of the quarter! Congratulations! The production of your Atlas has opened our eyes to critical and pressing issues across the American cultural landscape. Your images, maps, core samples, and other modes of representation illuminate the scale of impact on our systems, places, and things.

On Friday we will all share our Atlas narratives during a colloquium. While your narratives will guide viewers through the research, drawings, and projections evident in the pages of your Atlas, you must also discuss the potential for the specific places, systems, and things identified in your Atlas to:

enact  
deploy  
become  
modify  
shape  
design

a future space that aligns to the three main tenets of the Superstudio: decarbonization, justice, and jobs (DJJ). Each of you must develop a proposal ahead of Friday's colloquium that identifies a specific design project based upon your work so far this quarter. You must include this in your presentation on Friday as a way to provoke discussion about how your work so far can move forward.

At this point, the proposal need not be more than a verbal addition to your presentation. This proposal is much like the questionnaire, in which you identified the scope of research for your Atlas, except with more concrete details as to 1) what you're proposing, 2) where it should take place, 3) who it affects, 4) why it requires action, and 5) how it incorporates DJJ into its aim.

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## Colloquium

1:20	<b>Excess</b>	Reynolds Katelyn Vega Oriana Campbell Sam	Plastic Waste GMOs
1:40	<b>Economy</b>	Bariola Brantley Smith Rachel Smith Rocky	Ecotourism Amazon Disaster Relief
2:00	<b>Green Space</b>	Knox Garrett Hoffpauier Alex Currie Morgan	Parks Stress Environmental Injustice
2:20	<b>Infrastructure</b>	Kersh Tyler Bridgewater Larry North Jack	Stadium Reuse Youth Programming Libraries
2:40	<b>Water</b>	Davis Bam Colvin Joshua Ith Seth	Deforestation and Aquifers Nexus Great Lakes pollution
3:00	<b>Agriculture</b>	Eubanks Erin Malchow Clark Shipp Kendle	Textiles Corn CO2
3:20	<b>Urbanism</b>	Carmouche Avery Metoyer Danai Teixeira Vesua	Homelessness Baton Rouge Socioeconomics Transportation
3:40	<b>Food Systems</b>	Tinerello Kasey Strange Wyatt Stroud Hevin	GMOs Factory Farms Waste
4:00	<b>Energy</b>	Binkley Kelsey Deville Sydney Lehman Lindsay	Renewable Energy Renewable Energy Oil
4:20	<b>Industry / Atmosphere</b>	Bader Noura Rose Hayden Kelly Matt	CO2 Dandelions Nuclear
4:40	<b>Shaping Cities</b>	Digba Cedric Sharp Miranda Rowe Hunter	Gentrification Vacancy Transportation
5:00	<b>Human Condition</b>	Lacour Mallori Jones David Cooper Jordyn Yanko Chris	Incarceration Disability Purple Collar Jobs Cannabis