LMC 6215/8803 Media Archaeology
Graduate Level Course Description and Reading List

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TSRB 316B

What do we mean when we talk about "media archaeology"? In the most generous terms, media archaeology is a loosely-codified web of methods attached to the historical and material study of media and media transmission. As a domain of inquiry, media archaeology delights in and brings attention to the failed, the broken, the forgotten and the speculative. Media archaeology can offer a valuable counterpoint to more progressivist, linear or innovation-focused approaches emphasized in traditional media history and other historical disciplines.

In this course, we will explore media archaeology with a strong emphasis on method. Students will familiarize themselves with media archaeology's historical and theoretical grounding, including scholarship by Michel Fouacult, Walter Benjamin and Marshall McLuhan. Attention will be given to contemporary media scholars who began challenging progressivist media history in the 1980s, notably Lynn Spigel, Tom Gunning and Carolyn Marvin. The course will then weave through major figures and theoretical positions, including German media theory, contextualism and cyclicism, media ecology, feminism, and materialist media studies.

Each week of readings will be complemented by an in-class, hand's-on exploration of a specific media object, so students build a basis for discussing the material and technical properties of media. Students will be assigned to do compose 3 media archaeological treatments on the class' Media Wiki. As a capstone to the course, students will reconstruct or reinvent a dead medium, such as a camera obscura, a faraday cage, a player piano, a magic lantern, or similar object.

Course Texts:
Many of the books on the syllabus are being read as selections. I do recommend purchasing these books, but will provide PDFs of book selections. A small number of books are required:

Required Texts
Kittler, Friedrich A. *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*
Plant, Sadie. *Zeros + Ones*
Montfort, Nick, and Ian Bogost. *Racing the Beam*
Guins, Raiford. *Game After*

Recommended Texts
Nietzsche, Friedrich. *On the Genealogy of Morals*
McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*
Marvin, Carolyn. *When Old Technologies Were New*
Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. *Railway Journey*
Spigel, Lynn. *Make Room for TV*
Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New*
Zielinski, Siegfried. *Deep Time of Media*
Kirschenbaum, Matthew G. *Mechanisms*

Evaluation
Course grades will be based on 1 Course Presentations (10%) and 4 Object Lesson assignments (20% each), 3 of which will be posted to the course Media Wiki.
Course Presentation
Each student will prepare a short introductory presentation of a reading of their choosing. Students may not choose a reading on the same day an object lesson is due. Students should compose a powerpoint that covers:

- Brief biography of author
- Encapsulates main idea of text
- Articulates significance of text
- Offers one quote for close reading/discussion
- 2-3 question re: the text

Object Lessons
Graded at 20% each.

Object Lesson I: 500 words
Object Lesson II: 750 words
Object Lesson III: 1500 words
Object Lesson IV: Maker Project

Expectations
Students are expected to attend all classes, and to arrive on time with the course readings read and annotated. Failure to do so may result in grade penalties.

January 11: Course Introduction

January 18: An Archaeology of Method I
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Trans. by Douglas Smith. London: Oxford, 1996. Essays 1 and 2.
- Foucault, Michel. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. Edited by D. F. Bouchard. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1997. 139-164.

January 25: An Archaeology of Method II
- Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. Ed. by Hannah Arendt. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1968. "Theses on the Philosophy of History," 253-265.
- Giedion, Siegfried. *Mechanization Takes Command*. London: Oxford University Press, 1948. 2-11, 714-723.
- McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962. 0 (page before prologue); 151-176; 199-258
- McLuhan, Marshall. "8, Introduction to: The Bias of Communication." *Marshall McLuhan: Unbound*. Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, 2005.

February 1: Prefigurations of Media Archaeology (Or, There's Nothing New Under the Sun)
- Marvin, Carolyn. *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electric Communication in the Late Nineteenth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. Chapters 3-5. 109-232.
- Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. *Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19ᵗʰ Century.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987. Chapters 3-5: "Railway Space and Railway Time," "Panoramic Travel," "The Compartment."
- Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attraction." *Wide Angle.* 3.4 (1986): 1986.
- Spigel, Lynn. *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992. Introduction, Chapters 3-4. 1-10, 73-135.

February 8: [NO CLASS]

February 15: Object Lesson I + Contextualism and Cyclicism I
- Huhtamo, Erkki. "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd: Notes Toward an Archaeology of the Media." *Leonardo*. 30.3 (1997): 221-224.
- Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New: Media, History and the Data of Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008. Introduction, Chapters 1-2. 1-86.

February 22: Contextualism and Cyclicism II
- Huhtamo, Erkki. "Slots of Fun, Slots of Trouble: An Archaeology of Arcade Gaming." *Handbook of Computer Games Studies.* Ed. by Joost Raessens and Jeffrey Goldstein, 3-21. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.

- Wythoff, Grant. "Pocket Wireless and the Shape of Media to Come, 1899–1922." *Grey Room*. No. 51 (Spring 2013).

February 29: German Media Studies: Man is the Extension of Media
- Kittler, Friedrich A. *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986.

March 7: Object Lesson II + German Media Studies: Variotology
- Zielinski, Siegfried. *Deep Time of Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006. Chapters 1, 2 and 6. 1-38; 159-204.

March 14: German Media Studies: The Cold Gaze
- Ernst, Wolfgang. "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media." *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications.* Ed. by Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 239-255.
- Parikka, Jussi. "Operative Media Archaeology: Wolfgang Ernst's Materialist Media Diagrammatics." *Theory, Culture & Society.* 28.5 (2011): 52-74.

March 21: [SPRING BREAK]

March 28: A Feminist Media Archaeology?
- Nooney, Laine. "A pedestal, a table, a love letter: Archaeologies of gender in videogame

history." *Game Studies: The International Journal of Computer Game Research* 13.2 (2013).
- Plant, Sadie. *Zeros + Ones: Digital Women+ the New Technoculture.* New York: Doubleday, 1997.

April 4: Object Lesson III + Material Archaeologies I
- Gaboury, Jacob. "Hidden Surface Problems: On the Digital Image as Material Object." *Journal of Visual Culture* 14.1 (2015): 40-60.

April 11: Platforms and Media Forensics
- Montfort, Nick, and Ian Bogost. *Racing the Beam: The Atari Video Computer System.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009.
- Kirschenbaum, Matthew G. *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008. Introduction, Chapters 1, 3. 1-72, 111-158.

April 18: Material Archaeologies II
- Parisi, David. "Shocking Grasps: An Archaeology of Electrotactile Game Mechanics." *Game Studies* 13.2 (2013).
- Pias, Claus. "The game player's duty: The user as the gestalt of the ports." *Media Archeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* (2011): 164-183.

April 25: Media Afterlives
- Guins, Raiford. *Game After: A Cultural Study of Video Game Afterlife.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014.
- Hertz, Garnet, and Jussi Parikka. "Zombie media: Circuit bending media archaeology into an art method." *Leonardo* 45.5 (2012): 424-430.

Object Lesson IV: TBD