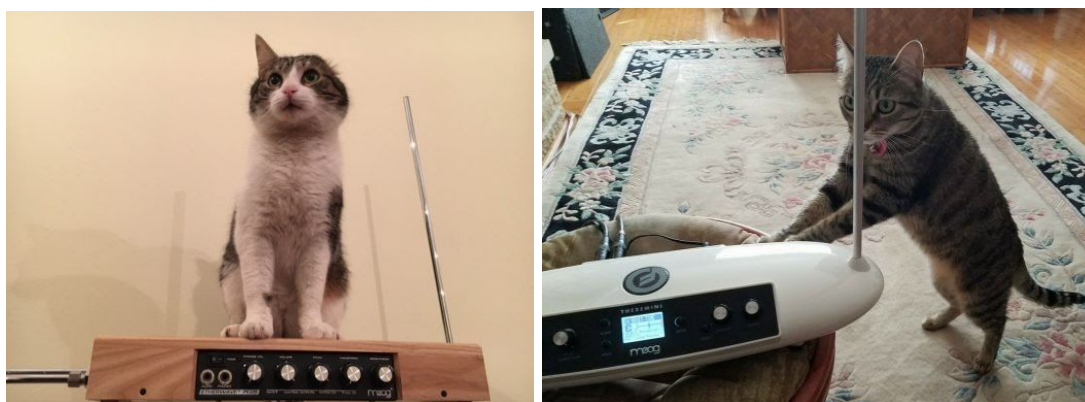


COMS 608/MUSG 694 (McGill) / HMAN 2400Z (Brown)
Instruments and Instrumentalities
Fall 2020
Fridays 14:30-17:00, with a half hour break around 15:30-16:00
(4 September 2020 Draft)

Please note: this is a draft version of the syllabus and may be subject to revision before the first day of class



Instructors:

Emily I. Dolan, emily_dolan@brown.edu (she/her/hers)

Jonathan Sterne, jonathan.sterne@mcgill.ca (he/him/his)

Please call us "Emily" and "Jonathan."

Please tell us what you would like to be called.

Dolan Office Location: LOL

Sterne Office Location: LOL.

Office Hours: by advance appointment via Zoom or phone. Each of us has a system that will appear here later.

Course assistant

Louis Wenger, louis-emmanuel_wenger@brown.edu (he, him, his)

"Please call me Louis"

Seminar Description

What is an instrument? Today, in a variety of fields, the definitions of instrument and instrumentality are transforming. While retaining its older connotations of delegation, means to ends, and tool-use, the terms instrument—and instrumental—now also imply bigger, messier complexes of technologies, bodies and rationalities. In some places, like the dashboards in cars, once-separate instruments collapse into systems. In others, like operating rooms, music studios, in machine learning scenarios, datasets, and financial markets, they proliferate wildly. In this seminar, we will think transversally,

across categories and contexts, to consider the form and meaning of musical instruments, technical instruments, and ideas of instrumentality. Students will also

Because the musical context has afforded a lengthy and deep reflection on the nature of instruments and instrumental activity, it will be a touchstone for the course, but we will also investigate instruments and ideas of instrumentality from other areas. How might thinking about instrumentality more broadly— by looking at forks, speculums, clocks, and datasets—inform our understanding of music and its relationships to technology? Conversely, how might the history of musical technology help us understand and unpack the concept of instrumentality more broadly? Readings will draw from music, media studies, science and technology studies, sound studies, cultural studies, and related fields.

The workload of this seminar is focused on short weekly writing assignments, the study of an instrument-maker, and an end-of-term paper, rather than the typical 25-30 page seminar paper.

Delivery Plan

Class sessions: Two 1-hour blocks with a 30-minute break in the middle--we strongly recommend walking away from your computer during the break. As this was originally planned as a distributed seminar, we haven't had to change all that much (except for cancelling some fun in-person meetups we had planned). All meetings will take place over Zoom. Our plan is to do fully synchronous instruction during class time. If there are students who are unable to take the course synchronously, we will work out solutions based on their particular situations.

During class, we will use a number of strategies for helping discussion in a large seminar: small group work on collective google docs (class catuments), short lectures and informal student presentations/responses, and probably other things that we will work out as we all figure out how to Zoom our best selves. There may also be a live backchannel in the chat if people are into it. Large group discussions will follow a speakers' list to prevent interruptions, and people will say "and that's my thought" or "and that's my question" to indicate they have finished talking.

The Course Website:

We will be using McGill's MyCourses system (a branded version of Blackboard). **Students at Brown should email Jonathan** with their full name and preferred email and they will be added to the system. The login is here: <https://mycourses2.mcgill.ca/d2l/loginh/>

There will also be a number of asynchronous components to this class: contributing to collective google docs and discussion boards, collective annotation of readings, focused small group discussion, etc.

A Disclaimer

(We wrote this before Covid--please have a good laugh at our expense.) Even though this is our second time teaching this course, it remains an experimental seminar format! This kind of distance collaboration requires adapting the particularities and peculiarities of the rooms we're teaching in (LOL) and the technologies we have available (also LOL). We might encounter hiccups over the course of the semester and some elements that we have planned out might need to be nuanced or even radically changed as the semester unfolds (ALREADY HAPPENED). But we are also hoping that we can all reflect productively on our seminar format and its pedagogical advantages, disadvantages, and challenges. (WE ALSO WELCOME PET ZOOM BOMBING-- NOT POSSIBLE PRE-COVID) This means we'll want feedback from you during the semester (THIS IS STILL TRUE). Please don't wait until the end of the semester to tell us something that might have been really helpful to do! "Despite these difficult, uncertain times," <cough>, we also hope that this course inspires you to think of new ways of collaborating across institutional, disciplinary, and national boundaries in your future teaching.

Course Requirements

Etiquette (same as it ever was):

1. Full and complete attendance, attention, participation, listening and reading (of required texts). We expect the very best you can give.
2. Good faith and good humor toward your colleagues in the classroom. For both: disagreements are expected and encouraged, but please keep nitpicking to a minimum; personal attacks and intimidation are not acceptable under any circumstances. There will be a strict limit on seek-and-destroy hermeneutics. Follow the Golden Rule. Encourage basic questions as well as advanced ones.
3. Your job as a participant is to listen actively to what others have to say and advance the discussion. **If you are a confident contributor** use your confidence for good and not evil. Help bring others into discussion, refer to your classmates by name, and be positive about the contributions of those who do not say as much.
4. While personal anecdotes are allowed, keep in mind this is a PhD seminar. Others may disagree with your interpretation of your experience. This is encouraged and allowed. If you are not comfortable with this, do not share your story. If you share your story and *then* decide you are uncomfortable with others discussing it, just ask us to stop and we will move the discussion along.
5. **Awkward Silences** and hesitation are okay. Don't feel you need to rush to speak and don't worry if you need a little time to articulate something. Contributing to class discussion is more than the frequency of the times your hand goes up and the number of words you say. If you are struggling to articulate something, that's probably a sign that you are saying something that is new and not obvious.

6. Difficult subject matter: As your profs, we will never do anything intentionally to shock or traumatize students. At the same time, it's our job to discuss difficult subjects in class, and nobody can predict the effect some materials may have on someone. We will try and give previews of the kinds of content you will encounter before you encounter it. If we forget, feel free to ask. If you are having difficulty dealing with a class discussion or a reading or recording, you may raise the issue as part of the discussion (keeping in mind #4 above), or you may simply discretely leave class. A note to us (the profs) would be helpful after the fact so that we know what happened and don't think you just got up and left.

Technology Policy

This course will encourage the thoughtful use of scholarly technologies such as talking and reading, computers and the internet, pen and paper, projection and chalkboards, monochords, theremins, speedometers, etc.

1. Pre-Covid, our technology policy stated that we would like to avoid an atmosphere of "ambient computing" and "availability to apps and social media." Even though people will be forced to use their computers a lot more, we still want to establish the same baseline: the classroom should be a space of focused discussion, a place to come together. Please try to resist multitasking. If you need to look something up (for the class discussion, not a dinner recipe), please do so quickly and then close that window.
2. Most Zoom etiquette documents suggest keeping video on as much as possible; we of course understand that this is not always possible.
3. Please turn off your microphone when you are not speaking to the class. Please turn it on when you want to speak to the class. We will all get very good at saying "You are still muted!"
4. If you choose to use a virtual background, you will get extra virtual points if it relates to the discussion at hand. We do not allow distracting or offensive backgrounds (you probably want to avoid video backgrounds!)
5. We will keep the Zoom chat enabled during class. Its use is optional, but you are welcome to use it to drop relevant links, conversational footnotes, etc. Jonathan and Emily will alternate watching the chat, but at times it is possible that contributions and ideas will go unnoticed and we ask that we take collective responsibility for ensuring that posts do not go unnoticed.
6. We will discuss the politics of printing out readings vs. looking at them on screen.
7. During our breaks, we urge you to actually step away from the computer. Zoom fatigue is very real.
8. We will discuss this technology policy on the first day(s) of class.
9. On the first day we will provide a proposed Zoom etiquette document (in a google doc) that we will discuss and approve as a group.

Stuff You Will Do In This Class (and % of semester grade):

I. Participation in Class (10%)

Talk about the reading and writing you did. This will be a holistic mark based on asynchronous and/or synchronous participation. See above and below.

Bad Class Twitter

This semester, we will experiment with collectively annotating readings. Annotations can take the form of short questions, thoughts, reactions to an assigned weekly reading. Jonathan and Emily will draw on these questions and ideas as we draw up our plans for class meetings: we want to make sure we are talking about what you want to talk about in class and this will help us coordinate the many moving parts of the seminar. If it works, we will expect at least one comment per person per session. **We will circulate more information on Perusall, the platform we will use for this once we have figured out how to use it.**

Classography and Instrumentarium (biblio-; audio-)

Over the course of the term, students will likely mention authors, readings, recordings, and instruments that are not on the syllabus in the readings. If you mention something like this in class (for instance, dropping the name of an artist you like, or adding a Foucault reference to a comment on the readings), we ask that you post something to the **Classography and Instrumentarium** with (as appropriate) a citation or web link as appropriate after class. We will also ask you to concisely explain your reference to the class when you make it.

II. Learn to Use a New Instrument (0%--you can thank us now)

This does not need to be a musical instrument. Keep a journal recording your experience with this instrument. You will not be evaluated on your ability to learn the instrument or anything else. "It's the journey, not the destination [sic]." There will be a section of the MyCourses site where you can share your experiences. If possible, aim to contribute at least four times over the course of the semester (i.e., once a month).

III. Interview an Instrument Maker (20%)

We ask that, in pairs (and possibly a trio depending on enrollment), you find an instrument maker and conduct an interview and write up a short report that you will post for the class to read, and each class will discuss the results of their interviews collectively in October. Interviews will have some shared questions, determined collectively by the seminar, and of course some questions may be specific to your instrument or maker.

You may already know an instrument maker or you may require some assistance tracking someone down. We're happy to help!

IV. Ongoing Instrument Project (70%)

Over the course of the semester, you will work on a particular instrument, around which you will assemble a dossier of sources and a portfolio of your own writing.

1. 17 September: The commitment.

By noon on the 17th you must submit a proposed topic to both profs for your semester project. The 1-2 page document will offer a 1-paragraph description of what you intend to research, and a list of potential places to go looking for primary source materials that matches well with the kinds of materials discussed in the readings. Please also list 5 secondary sources you can consult, ideally other scholars in your field (or a related field) who have written about your topic.

Note: This commitment is not provisional; once we approve it (and we may ask you to modify), you are committed to it for the entire term, though you can take it anywhere you like.

Your topic should be broad enough to keep you interested for the whole term, narrow enough to actually yield something like a conference talk or a journal article.

Your chosen instrument can be as general as “the speedometer,” “a cane,” or as specific as “Prince’s sign-shaped guitar”; the important thing is that there is a good deal of documentation about your instrument readily available to you. We will also provide you with a “treasure hunt” document to help you think up places to find primary sources. Over the course of the semester, we will ask you to build up a trove of documents and artifacts relating to your instrument.

Importantly, your topic does not have to be completely original. You can research something that’s already been researched. There is no burden of originality at all in object choice. In fact, we recommend avoiding the impulse to be too clever at this stage.

You are also disallowed from writing on your anticipated thesis topic. Choose something similar, allied, orthogonal or completely different to it, so long as you’re comfortable with the topic and it’s interesting to you. This will allow you greater room to experiment and also free you of a certain amount of ego-investment in the topic.

2. Weekly (except as noted): the dossier of sources.

Each week, you will acquire at least one artifact or document for your semester project that has some relation to the week’s reading assignment. Some weeks we may give more direct guidance than others. If your object is not digital, you will find a way to document it digitally, and post your document to a folder on the MyCourses.

You are, of course, welcome to collect more, but this is meant to be a process of weekly accumulation. Even if you collect a lot of documents in a single week, you are expected to keep at it week after week.

3. Weekly (except as noted): mini papers.

Each week (by Thursday, noon), you will upload to MyCourses a short paper of approximately 300-600 words (2-3 pages double-spaced in a standard font, excluding citations). The paper will make use of the document or artifact you acquired for the week (if you acquired more than one, focus on one, though others may be mentioned if necessary; you may also refer to material from previous weeks).

The paper must be written in the style of an author we have read for the week. Choose an aspect of one of the week’s assigned reading to imitate and try your best to imitate it. Your job is to try and occupy the same discursive headspace as the reading, except with your own material. The relevant aspects of “style” here are up to your interpretation. Is it something about the author’s prose style

that is relevant? Her analytical approach or theoretical commitments? The types of source materials he uses? We are asking you to take an instrumental approach to the reading.

4. Weekly (except as noted): in-class readings.

Bring your paper to class (and your artifact if it's good for show-and-tell) and be prepared to discuss your choices. Occasionally, we will have one or more students read from their papers, which will lead us into a discussion of the assigned text for the week.

5. 30 November, 11.59pm: The “Not-Really-Final” paper (posted in the appropriate place on MyCourses). By the time you reach this stage, you will have produced over 20 pages of text, in many different styles. For this project, you will revise them into a single 7-8 page double-spaced/ 2500-3000 word paper (roughly the length of a 15-20 minute conference presentation), with a coherent argumentative arc and style, in “your own voice.” This is strictly an exercise in writing and revision. No new research is expected; indeed new research will interfere with the main purposes of this assignment, which is to focus on writing.

6. Peer feedback on drafts will be delivered in small groups on 4 December. Everyone will read everyone's paper. However, you will also be assigned a small group, where members will all give feedback to one another on papers. Your goal is to identify what the paper is doing on its own terms and help the author to do more, or to do it better. What is the argument? How is evidence being used? What are the important stylistic elements? For students who cannot be physically present at the end of term conference, we will find a way to involve them in the small group discussions.

7. Final Revision or Proto-Revision

By **11 December, 11:59pm**, students will submit a “final” version of their paper. It may be fully revised, or it may be partially revised, with additional notes regarding how you anticipate taking on board the peer feedback you received during the 4 December session. The goal of this assignment is not to achieve perfection but to quickly turn around a revision based on substantial feedback. The profs will read and comment upon these “final” revisions. Part of this assignment is writing on deadline; that said, please be in touch if your circumstances make it difficult or impossible to meet the 11 December deadline.

Prof Feedback:

You are encouraged to meet with your “home prof” to discuss your performance in the course.

You are encouraged to meet with either of us to talk ideas.

We will BOTH provide feedback on the initial proposal for choice of object.

Your first weekly response will receive a close read *with written comments* from your “home” prof. After that, we will not provide detailed written feedback but will read everything. If there is an issue with one of your responses, we will let you know.

You are welcome to set a meeting with one of us (in most cases the “home” prof makes the most sense) to get feedback on your writing. Ideally, you would pick 1-2 assignments for comment after having done a few.

Your final assignment will receive substantial written feedback from both of us.

Peer Feedback:

You are encouraged to read other students’ weekly responses in preparation for class, or even after. Feel free to reply to them, as well. But this is not required and will not be evaluated except insofar as it follows class discussion rules.

For final projects, you will be asked (and given time) to provide substantial feedback on classmates’ projects.

Other Policies

French: In Quebec, you have the right to submit your written work in French and in many years some students in Jonathan’s seminars choose to do so. If you plan to write in French, please get in touch with Jonathan during add-drop so we can talk about how to handle it, as he is not particularly good at French. Normally it’s not a problem but since there is a writing-intensive component to the class, we should at least discuss how it will work.

Class discussions are in English, but native French speakers are encouraged to resort to French if you can’t find the right word in English and we’ll figure it out together. You are also welcome to read course materials in French (where they are available in French).

Accommodations and Access Needs: This is new to all of us, so you may discover you have certain access needs. Please contact us during the first two weeks of class and we will work something out.

For McGill students: You do not need to contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (McGill) in order to ask for an accommodation, though you are certainly welcome to work with them if you are so inclined (Jonathan works with them all the time). McGill’s OSD can be reached at 514-398-6009 (voice), 514-398-8198 (TDD), [<http://www.mcgill.ca/osd/>].

For Brown University students: Brown is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform Emily early in the term if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. For more information, please contact Student and Employee Accessibility Services at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu. Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the deans in the Dean of the College office. Emily also recognizes that going through the accessibility office can sometimes be cumbersome, and she is always happy to try to work out arrangements that best support your learning.

Nondiscrimination: If there is something we can do to make the class more hospitable, please let us know. We value equality of opportunity, and human dignity and diversity. In accordance with our Universities' policies, we will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnic or national origin, civil status, religion, creed, political convictions, language, sex, sexual orientation, social condition, age, personal difference or the use of assistive technology in negotiating that difference. Among other things, this means that you do not have to agree with your teacher, the assigned readings, or the majority of your classmates in order to do well in this course. You are, however, obligated to demonstrate an understanding of the course material *whether or not you agree with it*.

How to Interpret McGill's Inflated Graduate-Level Grades:

- A: Good work
- A-: Satisfactory
- B+: There is a problem with what you submitted
- B: There is a substantial problem with what you submitted
- B-: Lowest possible passing grade in a graduate course; indicates a major problem but not a failure
- C+ or lower: Officially considered a "fail" by the Graduate Studies Office.

In rare cases, if your performance on any assignment is not satisfactory, you may be asked to do it again.

You must complete all the major assignments to pass the course.

It is your responsibility to make sure we receive any assignment you turn in.

It is also your responsibility to properly back up your work: keep more than one digital copy and always have a paper copy of anything you submit (files get corrupted, equipment gets stolen, etc). I recommend syncing your important documents to a cloud storage service.

McGill has the following complex policy regarding incompletes:

The K contract: At McGill, grades of incomplete are called "K" grades and they are only supposed to be assigned after the student and professor have agreed upon a contract. I do not give incompletes ("K" grades) except in truly extraordinary personal circumstances that can be documented. K grades revert to "F" grades at the end of the next term unless a contract extension is signed by both professor and student. Extensions also will not be granted except in truly extraordinary circumstances.

The Passive-Aggressive K: Should a student fail to turn in a final paper and fail to contact Jonathan well before my deadline for submission of grades, he will issue a K grade without a contract. McGill Graduate Studies, however, still expects a contract to be filed and it will be the student's responsibility to make sure one is submitted. In these circumstances, should the paper be completed at a later date, it will receive a mark. However, students who receive a "K" in this

fashion will not be eligible to receive an “A” or “A-” for the course. I will not sign an extension for a K grade that was granted without a contract, and no late paper will be graded without a K contract being in place beforehand. I also cannot promise comments on a paper submitted after a passive-aggressive K.

McGill Required Academic Integrity Statement: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

McGill Required McGill Special Required Emergency Syllabus-Eraser Clause

[HAHAHAHAHAHAHA] : In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

We are keenly aware that we are still teaching in the middle of a global pandemic and that many of us are likely to find ourselves in difficult situations beyond our control during the semester. Please do not hesitate to contact us (Emily and Jonathan) if anything happens that makes learning and engaging difficult for you.

We also strongly recommend that you make 1-2 buddies early in the term whom you can text with if you get cut off, if you miss an entire class meeting, or need help from a peer on something. If you are having trouble finding a buddy, please be in touch with Jonathan and Emily.

Preliminary Schedule

We will feel no guilt if we only discuss 2 of the assigned 3-4 readings for any week in depth.

We will also feel no guilt if we change the schedule. But we will announce it in class.

If you have thoughts about a reading that we did not get to in seminar, please feel free to post to our discussion forum.

Here is a link to help you do the readings:

Paul Edwards, How to Read a Book, <http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>
<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/electronic-inspirations-9780190868192?cc=us&lang=en&>

4 September: Welcome, Introductions, Cheesy Ice-Breakers

11 September: Basic Concepts + Hermeneutic Reverse-Engineering and Agency

Gary Tomlinson, "Some First Principles," in *A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity* (Cambridge: Zone Books, 2015.), 23-50 (pp 45-50 especially).

Steven Shapin, "Pump and Circumstance: Robert Boyle's Literary Technology," *Social Studies of Science* 14/ 4 (November 1, 1984): 481–520.

Dylan Robinson, "Hungry Listening" and "Event Score for *Guest Listening*" in *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020, 37-76.

Recommended:

John Tresch and Emily Dolan. "Toward a New Organology: Instruments of Music and Science," *Osiris* 28 (2013): 278–98.

Dylan Robinson, "Introduction," in *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020, 1-26, especially pp 1-3 for the definition of hungry listening and 21-24 for an introduction to the concepts of "refusal" and "resurgence" if those are new to you.

Michael Veal, "Starship Africa: The Acoustics of Diaspora and of the Postcolony," in *Dub: Soundscapes and Shattered Songs in Jamaican Reggae* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 2013), 196-219.

18 September: Agency I

Shoshana Zuboff, "Two Species of Power," "Big Other and the Rise of Instrumentarian Power," and "A Utopia of Certainty," in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. New York: Public Affairs, 2019, book pp. 351-415; pdf pp. 1-61, Chapters 12, 13, and 14.

Akhil Gupta, "Poverty as Biopolitics," in *Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural Violence, and Poverty in India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 3-39 (notes 293-300).

Sara Ahmed, "Orientation Toward Objects," in *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 25-63.

Recommended:

Michel Foucault, "Questions of Method," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, trans. Colin Gordon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 73–86.

25 September: Control

Kate Crawford and Vladen Joder. "Anatomy of an AI System: The Amazon Echo as an Anatomical Map of Labour, Data, and Planetary Resources." New York: Artificial Intelligence Now, 2019. <http://anatomyof.ai>

Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, "Homophily or The Swarming of the Segregated Neighborhood," and "Proxies, or Reconstructing the Unknown, from *Discriminating Data: Correlation, neighborhoods, and the New Politics of Recognition*. In progress, and under contract with MIT Press, manuscript pp. 77-147. Please note: Wendy is sharing work in progress with us; please do not share with others. And note that the final version might differ from this one. Thank you.

Louis Chude-Sokei, "Modernism's Black Mechanics," from *The Sound of Culture: Diaspora and Black Technopoetics* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press: 2016): 21-77.

Recommended:

Shannon Mattern, "Mission Control: A History of the Urban Dashboard." *Places Journal* (March 2015).

<https://placesjournal.org/article/mission-control-a-history-of-the-urban-dashboard/?cn-reloaded=1>

2 October: Instrumentality and Disability, with special guest, Mara Mills, Associate Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication (NYU)

Michele Friedner, Mara Mills and Rebecca Sanchez, "How to Teach with Text: Platforming Down and Disability Pedagogy," *Avidly* (2 August 2020)

http://avidly.lareviewofbooks.org/2020/08/02/how-to-teach-with-text-platforming-down-as-disability-pedagogy/?fbclid=IwAR2h2q6Vq8cc_OnvgPol7w2YQrHQDHAG1mbBe3xayo_lrAxEeFUYPCTNOVY

More Readings TBA

Recommended:

Mara Mills and Jonathan Sterne. Aural Speed-Reading: Some Historical Bookmarks. *PMLA* 135/2 (2020): 401-411.

9 October: Bodies and Techniques

Marcel Mauss, "Body Techniques." *Sociology and Psychology: Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 95-123.

Michelle Murphy, "Immodest Witnessing, Affective Economies and Objectivity," *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health and Technoscience*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 68-101.

Fred Moten, "Resistance of the Object: Aunt Hester's Scream," *In the Break: the Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 1-24.

Recommended:

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*. Dublin: Webb and Chapman, 1846.

Bernhard Siegert, "Cultural Techniques: Or the End of the Intellectual Postwar Era in German Media Theory." *Theory, Culture & Society* 30/6 (2013): 48–65.

Thomas Macho, "Second-Order Animals: Cultural Techniques of Identity and Identification," *Theory, Culture and Society* 30/6 (2013): 30-47.

16 October: Agency II

Gilbert Simondon, "Introduction" and "Genesis of the Technical Object: The Process of Concretization." *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, trans. Cecile Malaspina and John Rogove. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 15-21 and 25-51.

Georgina Born and Joe Snape, "Max, Music Software and the Mutual Mediation of Aesthetics and Digital Technologies," *Music and Digital Media: A Planetary Anthropology*, ed. Georgina Born. (Durham: Duke University Press, forthcoming 2021?).

Sarah Sharma, "Temporal Labor and the Taxicab: Maintaining the Time of Others." *In The Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014) 55-80.

23 October: Artist Symposium

This session will focus on artists who work with bespoke technology. We will be bringing in three artists ([Maria Chavez](#), [Laetitia Sonami](#), + [Shia Wren-Moore](#)) and Kristina Warren (Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Brown) will help moderate this session.

30 October: Innovation and Resistance

Madeleine Akrich, "The De-Description of Technical Objects," in *Shaping Technology, Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*, ed. Wiebe Bijker and J. Law. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 205–24.

Lisa Nakamura, "Indigenous Circuits: Navajo Women and the Racialization of Early Electronic Manufacture," *American Quarterly* 66/ 4 (2014): 919–41.

Trevor Pinch, "Why You Go to a Piano Store to Buy a Synthesizer: Path Dependence and the Social Construction of Technology," in *Path Dependence and Creation*, ed. Raghu Garud and Peter Karnøe. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 381–402.

Jennifer Iverson, "Reclaiming Technology: From Information Theory to Statistical Form," from *Electronic Inspirations: Technologies of the Cold War Musical Avant-Garde* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019) 105-139.

6 November: Reports on Interviews with instrument makers

13 November: Seminar Guest: Ashon Crawley, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and African American Studies at the University of Virginia

Essay in progress on the Hammond Organ
Other readings TBA.

20 November: Boundary Objects

Susan Leigh Star and James R. Griesemer, "Institutional Ecology, 'Translations' and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907-39." *Social Studies of Science* 19/ 3 (1989): 387–420.

Louise Meintjes, "The Recording Studio as Fetish," *Sound of Africa!: Making Music Zulu in a South African Studio* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 71-108.

Matt Brennan, "Clever Drummer: Primitivism, Entrepreneurialism, and the Invention of The Trap Drummer's Outfit," *Kick It: A Social History of the Drum Kit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020): 9-50.

Recommended:

Jessica Riskin, "The Defecating Duck, or, the Ambiguous Origins of Artificial Life," *Critical Inquiry* 29 (2003): 599-633.

27 November: U.S. Thanksgiving holiday, **no class meeting** (but you'll have to work on your paper this week)

(Monday) 30 November, 11:59pm: The "Not-Really-Final" paper due

Everyone is expected to review all papers; we will assign you to small groups for closer reading and peer feedback.

4 December: Cascading Waves of Feedback Like At the End of a Rock Show, Only Much, Much Quieter

Students will meet in groups and give one another feedback on work in progress.

11 December: Revised Paper Due

This is a short turnaround after our feedback session. We aren't expecting perfect final papers. Remember: part of this is an exercise in incorporating revisions quickly.