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[180 new media in the creative arts](#)
[280 intro to new media art](#)
[323 drawing 2](#)
[377 cyberpunk](#)
[385 eco-art](#)
[399 informed by the land](#)
[399 tactical media](#)
[483 art & interactivity](#)
[496 agri-art](#)
[497 senior project](#)
[600 research methods](#)
[610 graduate seminar](#)
[616 networked art practice](#)
[620 theory & criticism seminar](#)
[000 issues and ethics in digital culture](#)
[links](#)

Course Syllabus - AVT 377: Cyberpunk | [Course Outline](#) | [Course Supplement](#)

PLEASE NOTE: Course content may be revised during the semester. Any changes will be announced during class and edits will be made to this document. Please refer back to this document on a weekly basis.

Professor: Mark Cooley
Spring 2017
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Note: The professor would like to express his gratitude to Professor Kirby Malone, who developed and taught this course for ten years in Mason's School of Art. Professor Malone generously contributed his time, ideas, conversation and course materials for SoA's 2013 reanimation of Cyberpunk.

Prologue

This course offers an opportunity for an examination of (cyber)culture and the implications of new technologies (and the systems which produce them) through an analysis and critique of cyberpunk and post-cyberpunk science fiction. Students conduct inquiries into the dominant themes and representations pursued in cyberpunk culture through a variety of lenses including philosophy, theory and criticism, scientific inquiry and the creative process. Students are asked to participate in a trans-disciplinary discourse, which attempts, like the best science fiction, to offer insights into where we are, where we've been and where we're going.

The Set Up

Cyberpunk is dead, or so the pseudonymous Vincent Omniaveritas took it upon himself to proclaim in the pages of cyberpunk's critical fanzine *Cheap Truth* in 1986. Just two years after Gibson's breakthrough *Neuromancer* the "revolution" had flat-lined, or so it was said. Perhaps, seeing the inevitable doom of this revolution ending (as revolutions so often do) in the hands and service of those least invested in revolutionary values, Bruce Sterling writing as Omniaveritas, decided it prudent to abandon the farm and set the horses out on the open range before the big shopping mall moved in.

We are now living in *The Future*, in the epicenter of the east coast sprawl no less. The malls moved in and out, but we get all our day-to-day post-apocalyptic supplies from Wal Mart. Some say that soon after making it big in the states cyberpunk moved to Japan, leaving most of the writers here to continue with their experiments and the U.S. entertainment industry to routinely reanimate Cyberpunk™ - a lifeless body of media tropes tuned to the key of dark, disturbed, dystopic, and techno-fetishistic. Reanimations often suffered the fate of poor Frankenstein's 1931 monster, having had the original literary brain traded out for the Hollywood one. For some, cyberpunk is a cliché, a hollowed out style, a techno-sublime backdrop or edgy sci-fi vehicle for an exceedingly small collection of regurgitated narratives done up in black leather, mirrorshades and enough CGI ass kicking to make your head spin. And that's exactly how they say the masses like it, an inch deep and a million miles wide. But that's not the whole story, as we'll see.

Out here in the sprawl the tchotchke-tech invasion runs at full-tilt. We do our entertainment/infotainment on the go now. It's mostly about us. What we ate for dinner, what we "like". God gave us opposable thumbs and we're finally beginning to discover their full potential. Tapping on screens we (re)construct ourselves in a parallel world where everything exists in quotes, where friends become "friends" and

so on. And though our virtual worlds seem infinite, even transcendent, the "infinite" is always inextricably tied to the finite. The iPad battery dies and the world is flat, a thin piece of glass reflecting us as we are. The movie ends, the lights come up and we shield our eyes from the sun as we leave the theater. But the dream lingers on. We check our messages, maybe check-in on fb® on the way to the car, "like" the movie, and so on.

And meanwhile offworld, the cyborgs making the gadgets through which our dreams are made jump from factory rooftops in an effort to test the limits of their programming and kill themselves in the process (recently, factory owners have attempted to retain the loss of valuable wetware by installing nets around the perimeter of the factories). In short, the spectacle abides (at least on this end of the rainbow) and converting the (digital) natives has never been so much fun, or profitable. The desire for an unconscious consciousness is stronger than ever it seems, as flesh-eating zombie hordes scuff big box store tile for the latest release of franchised dreams.

...And, all this built on the ground where revolutionary battles were once fought.

But maybe, just maybe, right now, somewhere in the sprawl or out beyond the wall, a group of shadowy figures raise their fists to a *sky the color of television, tuned to a dead channel* (which now days would be bright blue) and yell, "Cyberpunk is Dead, **Long Live Cyberpunk!**"

Abandoning Definitions in Favor of Tendencies.

Definitions are always the subject of great debate (or at least they should be). I will refrain from using definitions for the time being. The following outline touches on some of the dominant *tendencies* (as I like to call them) of cyberpunk.

>**Envisioning a globalized future** characterized by multiculturalism, combined with extreme class division and the hegemony of a corporate state. Stories often focus on street-level disenfranchised or disaffected characters who are often compelled to engage in dangerous border crossings of one type or another. Whether their travels be in geographic space, cyberspace, or psychological space, crossing over into forbidden zones is always met with intense danger and hostility.

>**Engaging with info-tech, biotech, and nanotech** by suggesting how the human body, the psyche, and society will transform with the development and use of invasive technologies, while insisting that these changes won't likely be dropped from the sky for the "benefit of all mankind," but rather, engineered and disseminated inside systems of tight economic, political and social controls.

>**Using the human-technology interface** as a way to explore how the conditions of post-modernity challenge deeply embedded paradigms of western thought; in particular, binary oppositions such as reality/illusion, originality/duplication, life/death, human/inhuman, male/female, organic/inorganic, artifice/nature.

>**Critiquing Corpo Statism** by depicting bleak and ecocidal post-industrial quasi-fascist states where tyrannical corporations wage war on public and individual interests for the benefit of powerful private parties. Particularly of interest is the way in which the rational society uses invasive technologies and city and social planning as apparatuses of control through surveillance, propaganda and overtly hostile acts.

>**Pushing DIY & DIWOism** in the punk and hacker traditions with an ambivalent stance toward technology as both a tool of dominance and liberation, ecstatic pleasure and unrivaled pain. Characters often work toward changing the beneficiary of technology by turning oppressive technologies against the interests that they were designed to serve.

Goals

To provide a supportive group context for investigating the issues, ideas, aesthetics, theory and criticism, in and around cyberpunk and postmodern science fiction.

To engage with the fictions of nonfiction and the nonfictions of fiction. That is to say, inspect the reciprocity of art and life.

To communicate, through text and dialog, careful, deep and rhizomatic readings and viewings of the course materials.

To practice critical thinking and an openness to the world of ideas, actions and potentialities.

Texts / Media

This course uses a variety of media and texts ranging from fiction, critical theory and documentary / journalism. Texts will be provided by the professor except for required literature. Students must select one of the following books and read it as a basis for the final project.

[*The Stars My Destination*](#), Alfred Bester, 1956
[*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*](#), Philip K. Dick, 1968
[*The Girl Who Was Plugged In*](#), James Tiptree, Jr., 1973
[*Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology*](#), edited Bruce Sterling, 1986
[*Neuromancer*](#), William Gibson, 1984
[*Symers*](#), Pat Cadigan, 1991
[*Snow Crash*](#), Neal Stephenson, 1992
[*Tea from an empty Cup*](#), Pat Cadigan, 1995
[*Altered Carbon*](#), Richard K. Morgan, 2002

Course Requirements

Student websites: Each student is required to start and keep a dedicated website (on a blogging platform of choice) to which all coursework will be posted. It is preferable that the site be private and password protected with an invitation going to the professor. All coursework is to be documented on the site and posted on or before the due dates provided in the syllabus. **Work will not be considered complete until it is posted.**

Assignments: Students are expected to produce text responses to the assignments presented in the course outline. Student texts should be completed with the intent of defining and applying key concepts delineated in the assignments and are evaluated on the degree to which they are successful in this regard. Texts should also serve as preparation for an informed and expanded classroom dialog. Successful writing for this course is characterized by clear and functional copy edited language that expresses a thorough engagement with course materials through the application of key concepts (represented through required readings/viewings/lectures in theory, criticism and journalism) to the films and literature assigned in the course outline. A note on would-be trollish writers: We're not here to write dismissive mini-manifestos (as witty as they may sometimes be) meant to slice, dice and roast our intellectual enemies. We're looking for ideas and opening our brains long enough to absorb them. And as we know, any agreement or disagreement should at least start with a thorough understanding of the ideas at play. Remember, assignments must be submitted to course blogs before being considered complete.

Final Paper: Students are responsible for writing a final paper or making creative project as a response to one of the following novels:

[*The Stars My Destination*](#), Alfred Bester, 1956
[*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*](#), Philip K. Dick, 1968
[*The Girl Who Was Plugged In*](#), James Tiptree, Jr., 1973
[*Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology*](#), edited Bruce Sterling, 1986
[*Neuromancer*](#), William Gibson, 1984
[*Symers*](#), Pat Cadigan, 1991
[*Snow Crash*](#), Neal Stephenson, 1992
[*Tea from an empty Cup*](#), Pat Cadigan, 1995
[*Altered Carbon*](#), Richard K. Morgan, 2002

Final Paper/Project outline **due 3/17**

Final Paper **due 5/4**

Participation: Discussions offer an important time for exploration, analysis and critique of course materials as well as a time for connecting course content to personal experience and current worldly events. As we all probably know, class discussions can be difficult to initiate and sustain, but when successful, they add immeasurably to the classroom experience. Attending class both prepared and engaged will help make this course a success. **And please remember this is a flesh congregation. Students telepresently or virtually engaged during class meetings are counted absent or asked to leave if they wish to continue their remote engagements.** Phones should be shut off during class. Laptops should only be used to take or retrieve notes. No, you don't need to check that email. Remember, you should control your technology; your technology (or the people on the other end of it) should not control you. This is a basic tenant of cyberpunk and also of this class. Your phone is calling you even as you read this... refuse, resist... Your friend, your boss, the NSA can

all wait! Let them feel the power of your will, and reject complete allegiance to the network.

Attendance: Only extraordinary circumstances should prevent students from attending class. Two absences are allowed. A letter grade reduction is made to final grades for each additional absence (unless excused for extraordinary reasons). Arriving late or leaving early more than twice results in an absence. Students spending class time on social media, video games and other distractions are counted absent. In the event of an absence, students are responsible for getting all missed information from their classmates unless extraordinary circumstances require a meeting with the professor during office hours. Class time is not used to review previously covered material in order to compensate for student absence or inattentiveness. In addition, email concerning information missed or misunderstood because of absence or inattentiveness will likely go unanswered. In short, instruction is **not** conducted by email. Students who make a habit of being unprepared, inattentive, or absent do not pass this course. Students may schedule an appointment during the professor's office hours if additional instruction is needed outside of studio hours.

Deadlines: Unless extraordinary circumstances occur, **tardy work will be dropped a letter grade for each class day that it is late.** All work, submitted to the professor **on-time**, may be reworked and resubmitted as many times as necessary until a satisfactory evaluation is received.

Evaluation

A | Work that demonstrates excellent understanding of ideas presented through the course materials.

B | Work that demonstrates commitment to expanding one's vocabulary and a good understanding of the ideas presented through the course materials.

C | Work that demonstrates a fair understanding of ideas presented through the course materials.

D | Work of below average quality that suffers from a poor reading and/or expression of ideas presented in the course materials.

F | Work that demonstrates neglect of course materials and requirements, nonexistent work, late work, or very poor application.

Weekly Papers 80%

Participation 10%

Final Paper 10%

Course Outline, Resources & Assignments | [top of syllabus](#)

NOTICE: Additions, subtractions and reorganization of course content are likely to be made in response to particular class needs. Changes will be announced during class meetings or sent to student GMU email. This webpage will be updated as changes are announced.

Class dates: T 1/24 | R 1/26 | T 1/31 | R 2/2 | T 2/7 | R 2/9 | T 2/14 | R 2/16 | T 2/21 | R 2/23 | T 2/28 | R 3/2 | T 3/7 | R 3/9 | Spring Break Mar 13 – Mar 19 | T 3/21 | R 3/23 | T 3/28 | R 3/30 | T 4/4 | R 4/6 | T 4/11 | R 4/13 | T 4/18 | R 4/20 | T 4/25 | R 4/27 | T 5/2 | R 5/4

Welcome to the Machine

| T 1/24 | R 1/26 | T 1/31 | R 2/2 |

Keywords

The CorpoState, (Post)Industrialization, Neoliberalism,
Commodification, Alienation, Reification, Machines vs. Tools, Living vs.
Dead Labor, Automaton, Robots, Androids

Films

Metropolis dir. Fritz Lang (1927).

Modern Times dir. Charlie Chaplan (1936).

Blade Runner dir. Ridley Scott (1982).

The Matrix dir. The Wachowskis (1999).

Sleep Dealer dir. Alex Rivera (2008).

Black Mirror: Fifteen Million Merits (S1, Ep 2) (2012).

Theory / Criticism

The Labour Process and Alienation in Machinery and Science. Karl Marx

Causes of Alienation From *The Marxist Theory of Alienation.* Ernest Mandel

and George Novak
[Disposable Life](#) - Slavoj Zizek

Documentary / Journalism

[The Corporation](#) dir. Jennifer Abbott, Mark Achbar

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper Due 2/7

Law & Order Ltd.

| T 2/7 | R 2/9 | T 2/14 | R 2/16 |

Keywords

Police States, Pre-Crime, Military Industrial Complex, Prison Industrial Complex

Films

[Alphaville](#) dir. Jean-Luc Godard (1965).

[Fahrenheit 451](#) dir. Francois Truffaut (1966), from the Ray Bradbury 1953 novel.

[THX-1138](#) dir. George Lucas, co-written, edited and sound montages Walter Murch (1972).

[Escape from New York](#) dir. John Carpenter (1981).

[Blade Runner](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982), from the Philip K. Dick 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

[1984](#) dir. Michael Radford (1984), from the George Orwell 1949 novel.

[Brazil](#) dir. Terry Gilliam (1985).

[Robocop](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven (1987).

[Strange Days](#) dir. Kathryn Bigelow, co-written by James Cameron (1995).

[Minority Report](#) dir. Steven Spielberg (2002), from the Philip K. Dick 1956 short story.

[iRobot](#) dir. Alex Proyas (2004).

[Sleep Dealer](#) dir. Alex Rivera (2008).

[District 9](#) dir. Neill Blomkamp (2009).

[RoboCop](#) dir. José Padilha (2014).

[Chappie](#) dir. Neill Blomkamp (2015).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory / Criticism

[What Robocop Tells Us about the Neoliberal City, Then and Now](#) by Keith Orejel

Documentary / Journalism

The Business of Security

[Ike's Warning of Military Expansion, 50 years later](#), NPR

[The Prison-Industrial Complex](#), The Atlantic, Eric Schlosser

Remote Warfare

[Dirty Wars](#) dir. Richard Rowley

[Unmanned: America's Drone Wars](#), Brave New Films

[Drone](#) dir. Tonje Hessen Schei (2015).

Domestic Police Issues

Democracy Now: [Police Coverage](#)

Fox News: [Police Coverage](#)

[Interview with Michael Wood](#)

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper due 2/21

Big Brother is Watching

| T 2/21 | R 2/23 |

Keywords

Keywords: Surveillance / Sousveillance / McVeillance, Data Mining/Intelligence Industry, Panopticism, Power of the Gaze, Selfie Culture, Anti-Social Media

Films

[Alphaville](#) dir. Jean-Luc Godard (1965).

[THX-1138](#) dir. George Lucas, co-written, edited and sound montages Walter Murch (1972).

[Blade Runner](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982), from the Philip K. Dick 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

[1984](#) dir. Michael Radford, from George Orwell novel (1984).

[Strange Days](#) dir. Kathryn Bigelow, co-written by James Cameron (1995).

[Cypher](#) dir. Vincenzo Natali (2002).

[Minority Report](#) dir. Steven Spielberg, from the Philip K. Dick short story (2002).

[Black Mirror: Fifteen Million Merits](#) (S1, Ep 2) (2012).

[Black Mirror: The Entire History of You](#) dir. Brian Welsh (2011).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory / Criticism

Discipline and Punish, III Discipline, [Chap. 3, Panopticism](#), Michel Foucault

Documentary / Journalism

[Citizenfour](#) dir. Laura Poitras (2014).

[Death By Metadata](#) Jeremy Scahill & Glenn Greenwald Reveal NSA Role in Assassinations Overseas.

[We Live in Public](#) dir. Ondi Timoner (2009).

[Steve Mann: AR eyeglass and wearable computing...](#) Surveillance versus Sousveillance

[McVeillance](#): How McDonaldized surveillance creates a monopoly on sight that chills AR and smartphone development, Steve Mann

[Interview with Ramsey Orta](#)

[Interview with Michael Wood](#)

[we cop watch](#) | [5 Rules for Recording Police](#)

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper Due 2/28

(anti)Social Media

| T 2/28 | R 3/2 |

Keywords

Postmodern Alienation, Loneliness, Haunted Media, Media-aided Depression

Film

[Videodrome](#) dir. David Cronenberg (1983).
[Strange Days](#) dir. Kathryn Bigelow. Story by James Cameron (1995).
[Black Mirror: Fifteen Million Merits](#) (S1, Ep 2) (2012).
[Pulse](#) (Kairo) dir. Kurosawa Kiyoshi (2001).
[Avalon](#) dir. Oshii Mamoru (2001).

Theory / Criticism

[Exploring Facebook Depression](#), Dr. Romeo Vitelli, Psychology Today
[Alone Together](#), TED, Sherry Turkle
[Social Media and Suicide: A Public Health Perspective](#), National Institutes of Health, David D. Luxton, PhD, Jennifer D. June, BA, Jonathan M. Fairall, BS
[The World Unplugged](#), MultiUniversity Study on Media Addiction

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.
Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.
Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper Due 3/7

The Flesh Machine

| T 3/7 | R 3/9 | Spring Break Mar 13 – Mar 19 |

Keywords

Eugenics, Biotechnology, Implants, Body Mods, Transmutation, Robots/Androids/Cyborgs/Replicants, Surrogates, Avatars

Films

[Metropolis](#) dir. Fritz Lang (1927).
[The Fly](#) dir. Kurt Neumann (1958).
[Blade Runner](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982), from the Philip K. Dick 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*
[The Terminator](#) dir. James Cameron (1984).
[The Fly](#) dir. David Cronenberg (1986).
[RoboCop](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven (1987).
[Tetsuo](#) dir. Shin'ya Tsukamoto (1989).
[964 Pinocchio](#) dir. Shozin Fukui (1991).
[Ghost in the Shell](#) dir. Mamoru Oshii.
[Gattaca](#) dir. Andrew Niccol (1997).
[Avatar](#) dir. James Cameron (2004).
[Repo Men](#) dir. Miguel Sapochnik (2010).
[Chappie](#) dir. Neill Blomkamp (2015).
[Ex Machina](#) dir. Alex Garland (2015).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory / Criticism

[The Coming of the Age of the Flesh Machine](#) from *Flesh Machine: Cyborgs, Designer Babies, & New Eugenic Consciousness*, Critical Art Ensemble, 1998
[Cyberspace, Cyberbodies, Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment](#), ed. Mike Featherstone and Roger Burrows

Documentary / Journalism

[The Corporation: Advancing the Front](#), Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in

your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper Due 3/21

We Bring Good Things To Life

| T 3/21 | R 3/23 |

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence (AI), The Singularity

Films

[Metropolis](#) dir. Fritz Lang (1927).

[Alphaville](#) dir. Jean-Luc Godard (1965).

[2001: A Space Odyssey](#) dir Stanley Kubrick, co-written and novel by Arthur C. Clarke (1968).

[Westworld](#) dir. Michael Crichton (1973).

[Demon Seed](#) dir. Donald Cammell (1973).

[Alien](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1979).

[Blade Runner](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982).

[Tron](#) dir. Steven Lisberger (1982).

[WarGames](#) dir. John Badham (1983).

[The Terminator](#) dir. James Cameron (1984).

[RoboCop](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven (1987).

[Ghost in the Shell](#) dir. Mamoru Oshii *S1Mone* (2002) dir. Andrew Niccol (1995).

[The Matrix](#) dir. The Wachowski Brothers (1999).

[AI](#) dir. Steven Spielberg, written by Ian Watson from Stanley Kubrick script (2001).

[iRobot](#) dir. Alex Proyas (2004).

[Moon](#) dir. Duncan Jones (2009).

[Her](#) dir. Spike Jonze (2013).

[Transcendence](#) dir. Wally Pfister (2014).

[Chappie](#) dir. Neill Blomkamp (2015).

[Ex Machina](#) dir. Alex Garland (2015).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory / Criticism

[Introduction to War in the Age of Intelligent Machines](#), Manuel De Landa

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper Due 3/28

You Are Not Yourself

| T 3/28 | R 3/30 |

Keywords

Subjectivity, Identity (re)Formation, Media as Message, Psychological Experimentation, Social Programing, Behaviorism, Social Psychology, The Other

Films

[The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari](#) dir. Robert Wiene (1920).

[The Manchurian Candidate](#) dir. John Frankenheimer (1962).
[Seconds](#) dir. John Frankenheimer (1966).
[The Mind Snatchers](#) dir. Bernard Girard, from Dennis Reardon play *The Happiness Cage* (1972).
[Invasion of the Body Snatchers](#) dir. Philip Kaufman (1978).
[Blade Runner](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982), from the Philip K. Dick 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*
[The Thing](#) dir. John Carpenter (1982).
[Brainstorm](#) dir. Douglas Trumbull (1983).
[Robocop](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven (1987).
[Total Recall](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven, from Philip K. Dick story "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" (1990).
[12 Monkeys](#) dir. Terry Gilliam, based on Chris Marker's 1962 film *La Jetée* (1995).
[Dark City](#) dir. Alex Proyas (1998).
[A Scanner Darkly](#) dir. Richard Linklater (2006).
[District 9](#) dir. Neill Blomkamp, Produced by Peter Jackson (2009).
[Total Recall](#) dir. Len Wiseman (2012).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory / Criticism

New Media and Technocultures Reader: Chapter 8 Marshall McLuhan,
Selected Material from *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. ed.
Martin Lister, Seth Giddings

[RadioLab: No Special Now](#), (audio)

[Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses](#). Louis Althusser (1971).

[The Interpassive Subject](#), Slavoj Žižek

[Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture](#). Stuart Ewen.

[Interpassivity revisited: a critical and historical reappraisal of interpassive phenomena](#), Gijs van Oenen

[Personality](#), Slavoj Žižek

Excerpts from [The Cyborg Manifesto](#), Donna Haraway

[Epilogue: Cyberpunk and Memory](#) (pgs. 204-214) *Cyberpunk and Cyberculture: Science Fiction and the Work of William Gibson*. Dani Cavallaro

Documentary / Journalism

[The Corporation: Basic Training](#), Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott

[The Corporation: Perception Management](#), Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Final Paper outline due 3/15

Paper Due 4/4

Remaking Memories

| T 4/4 | R 4/6 |

Keywords:

Memory, Memory Implants, False Memories

Films

[La jetée](#) dir. Chris Marker (1962).

[Blade Runner](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982), from the Philip K. Dick 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

[Total Recall](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven, from Philip K. Dick story "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" (1990).

[12 Monkeys](#) dir. Terry Gilliam, based on Chris Marker's 1962 film *La Jetée*

(1995).

[Strange Days](#) dir. Kathryn Bigelow, co-written by James Cameron (1995).

[Memento](#) (2000) dir. Christopher Nolan (1995).

[Dark City](#) dir. Alex Proyas (1998).

[The Black Mirror: The Entire History of You](#) (S1, Ep 3) (2012).

[Total Recall](#) dir. Len Wiseman (2012).

Documentary / Journalism

[Meet the Two Scientists Who Implanted a False Memory Into a Mouse](#), by David Noonan, Smithsonian Magazine, Nov. 2014

[Evidence-based justice: Corrupted memory](#), Nature, Moheb Costandi, 2013

[False memories](#) of sexual abuse lead to terrible miscarriages of justice, the guardian, Chris French, 2010.

[How to install false memories](#), Scientific American

Theory / Criticism

[Prosthetic Memory: Total Recall and Blade Runner](#), Alison Landsberg

Literature

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Reality Inc.

| T 4/11 | R 4/13 | T 4/18 | R 4/20 |

Keywords

Keywords: Consciousness, Ideology, Interpellation, (De)coding, Spectacle, Simulacra, Medium as Message, Simulation, Hyperreality

Films

[Videodrome](#) dir. David Cronenberg (1983).

[They Live](#) dir. John Carpenter (1988).

[Total Recall](#) dir. Paul Verhoeven, from Philip K. Dick story "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" (1990).

[Strange Days](#) dir. Kathryn Bigelow, co-written by James Cameron (1995).

[Dark City](#) dir. Alex Proyas (1998).

[eXistenZ](#) dir. David Cronenberg (1999).

[The Matrix](#) dir. The Wachowski Brothers (1999).

[Avalon](#) dir. Oshii Mamoru (2001).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory / Criticism

[The Perverts Guide to Ideology](#), (with Slavoj Zizek) dir. Sophie Fienne (film stream available on netflix).

[The Society of the Spectacle](#), (text) Guy Debord

[The Society of the Spectacle](#) (film w/ updated images)

[The Medium is the Message](#), Marshall McLuhan

[Simulacra and Simulations](#), Jean Baudrillard

[The Gulf War did not take place](#), Jean Baudrillard

[Jean Baudrillard](#) - Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

[RadioLab: The Real Don Quixote](#) (audio)

Assignment

Read/View Course Resources (these will become the references used in your writing):

See at least two of the films listed.

Read / view at least one of the theory / criticism pieces listed.

Read / view at least one documentary / journalism pieces listed.

Write a text applying key concepts derived from the reading(s) to the films you've seen. 500 word minimum.

Paper Due 4/25

The End

| T 4/25 | R 4/27 | T 5/2 | R 5/4 |

Keywords:

Dystopia, The Integral Accident, Ecocide, (Post)Apocalypse

Films

[*The Day the Earth Stood Still*](#) dir. Robert Wise from short story "Farewell to the Master" by Harry Bates (1951).

[*The War of the Worlds*](#) dir. Byron Haskin. Based on H.G. Wells (1953).

[*Fail-Safe*](#) dir. Sidney Lumet. Based on novel by Eugene Burdick (1964).

[*The Last Man on Earth*](#) dirs. Ubaldo Ragona and Sidney Salkow, based on the Richard Matheson 1954 novel *I Am Legend*. (1964).

[*Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*](#) dir. Stanley Kubrick. Script by Terry Southern (1964).

[*The Omega Man*](#) dir. Boris Sagal (1971).

[*Andromeda Strain*](#) dir. Robert Wise. From the Michael Crichton novel (1971).

[*Soylent Green*](#) dir. Richard Fleischer (1973).

[*A Boy and His Dog*](#) dir. L.Q. Jones. Based on a novella by Harlan Ellison (1975).

[*Mad Max*](#) George Miller (1979).

[*Blade Runner*](#) dir. Ridley Scott (1982), from the Philip K. Dick 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

[*Children of Men*](#) dir. Alfonso Cuarón, from the P. D. James novel (2006).

[*Idiocracy*](#) dir. Mike Judge (2006).

[*Mad Max: Fury Road*](#) dir. George Miller (2015).

[More films by theme](#)

Theory and Criticism

[*Invention of Accidents*](#), Paul Virilio

[*Accident Thesis*](#), Paul Virilio

[*Noam Chomsky: The Alien Perspective on Humanity*](#)

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Paper Due 5/4

Final Paper/Project due 5/4

University and School of Art Policies

University and School of Art Policies

In accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity

This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias

the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design

As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours

SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

ArtsBus

Dates for Spring 2017:

February 18

March 25

April 18

ArtsBus Credit:

* Each student must have up to 5 AVT 300/Artsbus credits before graduation. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment.

* If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for additional, very important information regarding ArtsBus policy.

* Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series

Dates for Spring 2017:

January 26

February 9

March 9

March 23

March 30

Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater:

<http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>

Important Deadlines

<i>January 1 Day of Week</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Mon Feb 13
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Wed Mar 1

Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 – Fri Mar 24
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 – Fri Mar 31
Spring Break	Mon Mar 13 – Sun Mar 19
Incomplete work from Fall 2016 due to Instructor	Fri March 31
Incomplete grade changes from Fall 2016 due to Registrar	Fri April 7
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline	Fri May 5
Last day of classes	Sat May 6
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	Mon May 8 – Tue May 9
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 10 – Wed May 17
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 20

Once the add and drop deadlines have passed, instructors do not have the authority to approve requests from students to add or drop/withdraw late. Requests for late adds (up until the last day of classes) must be made by the student in the SOA office (or the office of the department offering the course), and generally are only approved in the case of a documented university error (such as a problem with financial aid being processed), LATE ADD fee will apply. Requests for non-selective withdrawals and retroactive adds (adds after the last day of classes) must be approved by the academic dean of the college in which the student's major is located. For AVT majors, that is the CVPA Office of Academic Affairs, Performing Arts Building A407.

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences

If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide me with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code

Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Catalog. The honor code requires that the work you do as an individual be the product of your own individual synthesis or integration of ideas. (This does not

prohibit collaborative work when it is approved by your instructor.) As a faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences that will follow you for the rest of your life. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or to a member of the GMU Counseling Center staff.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words and punctuation just as the passage appears in the original and must use quotation marks and page numbers in your citation. If you want to paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you must put the ideas into your own words, and you must cite the source, using the APA or MLA format. (For assistance with documentation, I recommend Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*.) The exception to this rule is information termed general knowledge—information that is widely known and stated in a number of sources. Determining what is general knowledge can be complicated, so the wise course is, "When in doubt, cite."

Be especially careful when using the Internet for research. Not all Internet sources are equally reliable; some are just plain wrong. Also, since you can download text, it becomes very easy to inadvertently plagiarize. If you use an Internet source, you must cite the exact URL in your paper and include with it the last date that you successfully accessed the site.

Writing Center

Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ttraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.

