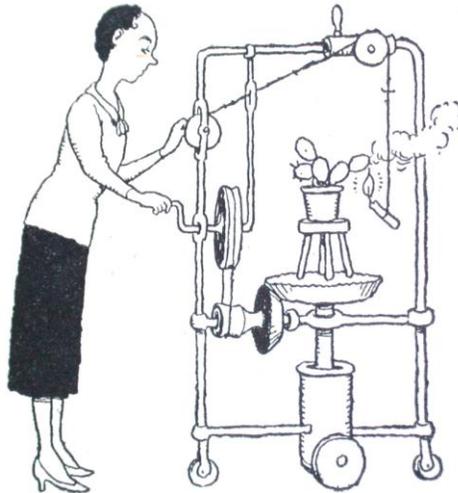


HUM 380-02/COM 580-04: Science and Technology Studies  
Illinois Institute of Technology, Humanities Dept.  
Thursdays 5-7:40pm  
E1 Room 119  
Spring 2013

Professor Hicks  
[mhicks1@iit.edu](mailto:mhicks1@iit.edu)  
@histoftech

Office Hours Thursdays 3:05-4:15 p.m.  
and by appointment in Siegel 206



*A Handy Device for De-Spiking Cacti*

Cartoon by W. Heath Robinson, 1938

### **Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to the field of Science and Technology Studies which will acquaint you with key theories and methods in the field and consider questions about the relationship between technology and society. In particular, we will focus on several themes:

- How technologies are instruments of social control. Sometimes in a very intentional way, sometimes “accidentally.”
- How social expectations and need shape technological artifacts during their design and deployment, and how far this process extends into the realm of the “technical”
- How people are affected differently, according to their race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, socioeconomic status, or other categories, by the same technologies
- How the history of these changes is useful for your understanding of your own fields of study and your endeavors as engineers, scientists, or humanists.

## **Expectations:**

You are expected to do the reading for each class day in advance of the class, and to complete the relevant assignments laid out on the syllabus, or assigned in class, for the dates defined. Late work will not be accepted except in the case of illness or unusual hardship. It is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate in the event you miss class—please refrain from emailing me to ask me to catch you up unless you've exhausted all other options. Due to the length and discussion-based nature of class it is not possible for me to provide extensive summaries of what was covered.

You are encouraged to take advantage of IIT's Writing Center to help you improve your writing. It is located in the Humanities Department, Siegel Hall, Room 232-233:

[http://www.iit.edu/csl/hum/resources/writing\\_center.shtml](http://www.iit.edu/csl/hum/resources/writing_center.shtml)

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verified disabilities. Please register with IIT's Center for Disability Resources and also speak with me at the start of the semester:

<http://www.iit.edu/cdr/>

Please be aware of the code of student conduct contained in your student handbook: cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade.

## **Assignments:**

*For undergraduates, your grade will be composed of the following:*

Attendance, participation, unannounced in-class writing assignments or quizzes: 20%

Several small projects that are listed on the syllabus, given as homework: 20%

Blog comments and responses to your peers' comments: 20%

Midterm exam: 20%

Final paper and presentation: 20%

*For graduate students, you will be responsible for the above and also for the satisfactory completion of any readings or assignments listed as optional for undergraduates. For one day during the semester you will be responsible for helping to lead class discussion (assigned in advance). You will be expected to play an active role in class discussion and perform to a higher standard than your undergraduate peers on assignments.*

## **Readings:**

Several books are available to buy at the bookstore (list below). The rest of the readings will be available on Blackboard or through URLs on the syllabus. You must bring a copy of the day's readings with you in paper or electronic form. If you choose not to purchase all of the required books you must ensure that you procure a copy through the library or ILL. Books with asterisks (\*) are highly recommended for purchase as they are new releases, are not on reserve at Galvin, and will be difficult to get through ILL.

*Recoding Gender* by Janet Abbate\*

*Cybernetic Revolutionaries* by Eden Medina\*

*Codename Revolution* by Steven Jones and George Thiruvathakal\*

*Killing the Black Body* by Dorothy Roberts

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot (optional—we will read sections of this book, but not the whole thing)

## Schedule:

### Class 1

1/17 What is STS? And why should you care?

Handouts in class, class exercise, syllabus

### Class 2

1/24 Technical versus Social

N. Balabanian, "On the Presumed Neutrality of Technology"

L. Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Politics?"

Amish Technology Articles (K. Kelly, J. Wetmore, and E. Tenner)

### Class 3

1/31 SCOT and ANT

B. Latour, "Where are the Missing Masses: A Sociology of a Few Mundane Objects"

T. Pinch and R. Kline, "Users as Agents of Technological Change"

1<sup>st</sup> BLOG COMMENT DUE by 5pm 1/30

(After posting your comment, please read and comment on at least one other person's post.)

### Class 4

2/7 Technocracy

*Cybernetic Revolutionaries* by Eden Medina (whole book, pp. 1-249)

New York Times, "Before Fruit Ninja, Cybernetics" <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/30/opinion/the-no-10-dashboard-and-cybernetics.html>

ComicBook! iPad app exercise assigned

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/comicbook!/id436114747?mt=8>

### Class 5

2/14 Personal Bodily Integrity vs. the Greater Good

Documentary screening in class:

"The Man with the Golden Cells" (National Film Board of Canada, 2008, 53 min.)

Read selected excerpts from *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (optional: read more of book than assigned excerpts)

ComicBook! iPad exercise due

### Class 6

2/21 Filling Gaps in Technological Space

*Codename Revolution* by Steven Jones and George Thiruvathakal (whole book, pp. 1-170)

2<sup>nd</sup> BLOG COMMENT DUE by 5pm 2/20

Storify exercise assigned

### Class 7

2/28 Are We All Cyborgs?

B. Woods & N. Watson, "In Pursuit of standardization: the British ministry of health's model 8F wheelchair, 1948-1962"

D. Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto"

Selected news articles on cyborg culture on Blackboard

Storify assignment due--post description of your Storify and link to it on blog by 5pm 3/6

Class 8

3/7 Invisible People in Technological Systems

Excerpts from *Invisible Users* by J. Burrell

*Mother Jones* article, "I Was a Warehouse Wage Slave"

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/02/mac-mcclelland-free-online-shipping-warehouses-labor>

Midterm Review

Class 9

3/14 MIDTERM EXAM

## **Spring Break**

Class 10

3/28 Does Technology Take Gender into Account?

*Recoding Gender* by Janet Abbate (whole book, pp. 1-175)

Articles on Stereotype Threat and Medical Research on Blackboard

Optional: Listen to Hannah Valentine Lecture, "How Gender Can Save Lives: Redesigning Medical

Research," available on iTunesU from Stanford (you will need iTunes for your computer, or the iTunesU

app for iPad/iPhone): <http://itun.es/iSV5mf>

(Final paper/project assigned, due 5/2)

Class 11

4/4 The Fruits of Imperialism

Documentary screening in class: Origins of AIDs (National Film Board of Canada, 2005, 43 min)

and read:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/18/health/18aids.html?pagewanted=all>

Assignment: Discuss film and article in class, on twitter, with #originsofaids

Class 12

4/11 Does Racism Motivate Technological Progress?

Selections from *Killing the Black Body* by Dorothy Roberts

3<sup>rd</sup> BLOG COMMENT DUE by 5pm 4/10

(After posting your comment, please read and comment on at least one other person's post.)

Class 13

4/18 With Great Power Comes Great Lack of Responsibility

Articles on cybermobs, online bullying, and casual technological misuse

4<sup>th</sup> BLOG COMMENT DUE by 5pm 4/24

Class 14

4/25 Mapping Knowledge Project in class

Listen to This American Life episode on "Mapping" in advance of class:

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/110/mapping>

Class 15

5/2 Summation

Final paper due, Final projects presented in class

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