

HUMN25: Humans and Machines, A History

Summer Session 2
July 31st- September 1st, 2023,
Monday and Wednesday, 9.00-12.30
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Course Description

In this course, we will explore how humans and machines have interacted, become intertwined, and opposed one another throughout history, from the Paleolithic era to the present. Through a variety of texts (theory, philosophy, theater, visual art, instruction manuals, films, advertisements, and podcasts), we will be discussing how machines can enable, inhibit, and control their users in a variety of contexts. You will also have the chance to apply historically grounded knowledge to propose technological solutions to contemporary problems. This course fulfills the Textual Analysis & Interpretation (TA) GE.

Learning Goals

Through participation in this course, you will:

1. **Explore** how humans and machines interact in a transnational historical context.
2. **Analyze** different types of text about machines (historical, instruction manuals, advertisements, film, propaganda) and use textual evidence to think, evaluate and argue critically.
3. **Connect** practices of textual interpretation and analysis to everyday experience and design/engineering practice.
4. **Recognize** how machines and design are situated in time and place, reflect societal values and have immediate impacts in the future.
5. **Imagine** machines that are conscious and compassionate with humans, non-humans, and the environment.
6. **Establish** the practice of active listening and creatively citing

Course Materials

In this summer course, we will engage with the history and interactions between humans and machines in four ways, through texts we read, through films we watch, through podcasts and contemporary articles we review, through the writing exercises we do, and through the project you will all engage in together. You can access all course materials, tools, and media on Canvas or online through provided links. Purchasing additional texts is not necessary, but if you feel called to, you can print out the readings (which might help with your eyes).

Teaching Approach:

I hope this class can be a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment where we can all think, learn, and experiment together. I expect you will arrive to class prepared, having read the materials, and ready to engage in thought experiments, discussions, and activities with me and your peers. I do not believe in teaching centered around me re-mediating the material to you. Still, instead, I hope we will all be able to experiment, play and interact with each other

and the materials. I am waiting for you to use your experiences with machines and build up your textual analysis skills with me as your guide on a wild learning journey.

Instructor Information

Marilia Kaisar, Ph.D. Candidate of Film and Digital Media, UCSC, pronouns (she/her) prefers to be called Marilia instead of Professor, Ms, Msc, Ms Kaisar, etc.

If you want to know what my work is about, feel free to lurk on my website mariliakaisar.com

You can always message me on Canvas (preferred) or, for emergencies, email at mkaisar@ucsc.edu (always use HUMN25 in the subject line).

Instructor Office Hours

Time: Tuesday 9:00-10:00 am

How: Make an appointment with me at <https://mkaisar.youcanbook.me/> or email me to find another time

Where: My Zoom Room

Why: To get clarity about assignments, to ask questions about machines, humans, post-humans, AI, theory, films, texts, and the world, to think together, to get accommodations if you are facing some difficulty, to share what you love or hate about the class, to seek together a better learning experience for all of us.

TA Information

Caitlin Flaws, Ph.D. Student in Literature

Email: cflaws@ucsc.edu

TA Office Hours

Time: Thursday 9:00-10:00 am

Where: <https://ucsc.zoom.us/j/95795289472?pwd=Yll5eWxpSE1GaW1iaWl6WHhEdGRuZz09>

Assignments

During the course, you will engage with three assignment families:

- Textual Analysis (due on Wednesday after class). Those small written assignments intend to engage you with the readings but also gradually teach you how to analyze different texts and use them as tools to think with. You have to complete **3 out of 5** Textual Analysis Assignments. (3x10)
- Making Machine History (due on Sunday night). This ongoing assignment will begin in the first week of the class and gradually build into a final project. This series of assignments invites you to collaborate and work closely with your classmates to develop a project. On the last day of the class, you will all have the chance to present what you have been doing to other people in the class. Your projects might also be shared in the Humanizing Technology Certificate exhibit/event at the end of the school year (4x10).

- Drop a quote/question/thought (due before class). This short engagement activity will help you better prepare for our classes and stay on top of your reading game. After reading the texts AND before you come to class, respond on a Canvas Discussion or Flip and explore your classmates' experiences of the readings/films/podcasts of this week. **You have to complete 7 out of 10 of those reflections.** Complete all of them for extra credit (7x2)

Assessment FAMILY	Assignment	Points
Making Machine History	Complete all 4	46
Week 1	Historical Timeline	10
Week 2	Problems+ every day	10
Week 3	Alternative Timeline	10
Week 4	Speculative Machine	10
Group Presentations		6
Textual Analysis	Choose 3 out of 5	30
Week 1	Bullet	10
Week 2	Instruction Manual Reading	10
Week 3	Chat GPT and Me	10
Week 4	Argue in Style	10
Week 5	Reflections on Machine History	10
Drop a Quote	Choose 7 out of 10/ 7x2	14
Attendance	10x 1 point	10
Total		100

Remote Group Work

Working in groups requires patience, communication, and an open heart but provides us with the opportunity to learn how to collaborate and bounce ideas off one another, using our skills to both become better and help others improve. This is a synchronous remote course. Still, I have decided to incorporate group work to offer you the chance to meet each other and come together in smaller groups, even if that is remote. You are expected to work together on the large history-making project between the weeks. Please plan and use ample collaboration tools like Zoom and Google Docs. If you are facing difficulties meeting or finding your collaborators, please contact me as soon as possible, and we will find a solution.

Late Policy

Assessments in the class are designed as building blocks, so it would be better for your learning if assignments were turned in on time. In reality, though, things happen. If you realize that you cannot finish on time, email me at mkaisar@ucsc.edu or your TA at to figure out a solution that makes sense.

A Note on Difficult Material

In college courses, we often view material that contains difficult ideas, uncomfortable language, violence, or sex. Please treat what we explore in class critically and as a tool to think about the work's social impact, even if it makes you uncomfortable. Of course, you are welcome to follow your reaction and choose not to view difficult material or scenes. I am always happy to discuss what we viewed in class or during office hours.

I have done my best to provide trigger warnings using a trigger description and the fire emoji 🔥

An ideal weekly course schedule

This is a recommendation of how you should spend time in this class combining solo and group work/readings/attending the course. The ideal does not exist, and you can always adjust as you please.

Monday:

- Attend class (1 hour-90 minutes)
- View the film after class and complete the response on Flip (2 hours)

Monday to Wednesday: (5-6 hours)

- Complete the readings (2 hours)
- Listen to podcast (1 hour)
- Drop a Quote (20 min) and/or complete a Textual Analysis Assignment (2 hours)

Wednesday:

- Attend class (1 hour)
- Introduction to group assignment and brainstorming (15 min)
- Work in groups (30 min)

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Wednesday to Monday (5 hours)

- Do my readings, take notes, prepare questions (2 hours)
- Work with my group on group assignment (3 hours)
- Submit work on Canvas by Sunday evening.

Week 1 What is human/ what is machine

Monday, July 31st| Introductions

Introductions, Community Guidelines, Syllabus, Discussing the course, Making the groups

WATCH

- Dziga Vertov, Man with The Movie Camera (1929)
- <https://aeon.co/videos/fast-forward-through-a-history-of-human-artefacts-from-arrowheads-to-plastic-toys>

Before next class

READ

- “The Mirror of Design” (9-23), “The Invention of the Human” (51-63) and “News from Nowhere” (75-89), In Colomina, Beatriz, and Mark Wigley. Are We Human? Notes on an Archaeology of Design. Zürich, Switzerland: Lars Müller, 2017.
- Sophocles, Antigone lines 334-383.
- “The Apparatus” (21-32), In Flusser, Villem, Towards a Philosophy of Photography, 2000

LISTEN

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/vox-ex-machina/>

PLAY

- Textual Analysis 1: Bullet points
- Drop a quote 1

Wednesday, Aug 2 | What is human? What is a machine?

Discuss what a human is. What is a machine? What is a tool? What is technology? Create groups. Start working together and thinking about timelines.

WATCH

Godard, Jean Luc. *Alphaville* (1965)

Before the next class

READ (before the next class)

- “Computer: The Coldwar Course of Media” In Starosielski, Nicole. *Media Hot and Cold*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2022.
- “On Sourcery and Source Codes”, In Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong. *Programmed Visions: Software and Memory*, 2011. Read-only pages 29-41. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/9780262015424.001.0001>.

LISTEN

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/of-mice-and-men/>

PLAY

- Making Machine History 1: Pick your machine, historical timeline
- Drop a quote 2

Week 2

Monday, Aug 7 | Cold Computers

Discuss computers

WATCH

Rivera, Alex, *Sleep Dealer*, 2008 🔥 (violence, heavy subject)

Before next class

READ

- “Domestic Technology: Labour-saving or Enslaving” (81-110), In Wajcman, Judy. *Feminism Confronts Technology*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991.
- “Hydraulic Civilizations (4000-1500 BCE) (17-35), In Headrick, Daniel R. *Technology: A World History*, 2009.
- <https://shakerml.wordpress.com/2016/07/20/the-shaker-improved-washing-machine/>

PLAY

- Textual Analysis 2: Instruction Manual Reading
- Drop a quote 3

Wednesday, Aug 9 | Domestic Machines

Before next class

READ

- Haraway, Donna J.. 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century'. In *Manifestly Haraway*, read the shortened version.
- "In/Human", "Transhuman/Posthumanism" and "Nonhuman Agency", In Braidotti, Rosi, and Maria Hlavajova, eds. *Posthuman Glossary*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.
- Truitt, E.R, *Preternatural machines*, <https://aeon.co/essays/medieval-technology-indistinguishable-from-magic>

WATCH

Cameron, James, *The Terminator*, 1984.

LISTEN

Chat GPT podcast

PLAY

- Making Machine History 2: Alternative Timelines
- Drop a quote 4

Week 3

Monday, Aug 14 | AI/Robots

Artist Visit with Amy Reid to discuss truck driving and sewing machines and get introduced to her film *Long Haulers*

Before next class

READ

- Ben Chappell, "Take a Little Trip with Me: Lowriding and the Poetics of Scale," in *Technicolor: Race, Technology, and Everyday Life*, 2001.
- Apollonius, *Argonautica* (selections). <https://www.theoi.com/Text/ApolloniusRhodius1.html>
- <https://aeon.co/essays/how-can-history-help-the-never-ending-human-dance-with-water>'
- "The Acceleration of Change: 1869-1939"(111-129), In Headrick, Daniel R. *Technology: A World History*, 2009.

WATCH

Reid, Amy, *Long Haulers*, 2018.

Ghaffari, Mitra Elena, *Bicycle Island*, 2022.

LISTEN

Unladylike, Episode 2, How to Ride a Bike

<https://www.unladylike.co/episodes/002/women-bicycles>

PLAY

- Textual Analysis 3: Chat GPT and Me
- Drop a quote 5

Wednesday, Aug 16| Transport

Artist Visit with Mitra Elena Ghaffari to discuss bicycles and musical instruments as machines.

Before the next class

READ

- Marx and Engels, "Capitalism and the Modern Labor Process:" excerpt
- "The First Industrial Revolution" and "Towards a Postindustrial World" In Headrick, Daniel R. *Technology: A World History*, 2009.

WATCH

- Funari, Vicky, Maquilapolis, 2006
- Chaplin, Charlie, Modern Times, 1929
- <https://aeon.co/videos/quarrying-massive-blocks-of-marble-takes-huge-machines-and-precise-gestures>

PLAY

- Making Machine History 3: Interacting with Machines
- Drop a quote 6

Week 4

Monday, Aug 21| Factories

WATCH

- Akomfrah, John, The Last Angel of History, 1996
- The Afronauts,
- Ruha Benjamin, From park bench to lab bench - What kind of future are we designing? | Ruha Benjamin | TEDxBaltimore https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RrX4hiCrO&ab_channel=TEDxTalks

Before next class

READ

- Gaskins, Nettrice R. "Techno-Vernacular Creativity and Innovation across the African Diaspora and the Global South" (252-274), In *Captivating technology*, 2019
- "Obsolete Technologies" and " In In Braidotti, Rosi, and Maria Hlavajova, eds. *Posthuman Glossary*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.
- "A Map of Unreality" (11-21). In Dunne, Anthony, and Fiona Raby. *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming*. Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London: The MIT Press, 2013.

LISTEN

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/home-on-lagrange/>

PLAY

- Textual Analysis 4: Argue in Style

- Drop a quote 7

Wednesday, Aug 23| Speculative Machines

Before next class

READ

- Chapter 1, In Virilio, Paul, *War and Cinema: The Logics of Perception*
- “War”, Posthuman Glossary
- “Killer Robots: Feeling Human in the Field of War” (163-188), In Atanasoski, Neda and Vora, Kalindi, *Surrogate Humanity: Race, Robots and the Politics of Technological Futures*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2019.

WATCH

Farocki, Harun, *Images of the World and the Inscription of War*, 1989.

LISTEN

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/tom-swift-electric-rifle/>

PLAY

- Making Machine History 4: Speculative Machines
- Drop a quote 8

Week 5

Monday, Aug 28| War

READ

- “Do Machines Make History?”, Heilbroner L. Robert
- “Consuming Monsters: Big, Perfect, Infectious”, In Dunne, Anthony, and Fiona Raby. *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming*. Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London: The MIT Press, 2013.
- “Technicity”, “Technoanimalism” In In Braidotti, Rosi, and Maria Hlavajova, eds. Posthuman Glossary. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

LISTEN

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/space-trash-space-treasure/>

PLAY

- Textual Analysis 5 : Speculating and Reflecting
- Drop a quote 9

Wednesday, Aug 30| Final Presentations

Making Machine History Presentations

CONGRATULATIONS! WE HAVE FINISHED THIS COURSE IN ONE PIECE!

Community Guidelines:

UCSC suggests the following principles of community: to be diverse, open, purposeful, caring, just, disciplined and celebrative. But in this class we will be forming our own little community for a quarter. So I hope that in our first class we can spend some time discussing and determining what community guidelines might mean for us as a group and how we can create an inclusive, accessible and enjoyable learning environment during our remote learning experience.

<https://www.ucsc.edu/about/principles-community.html>

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/14fb9IK3GP2rxmdTj05RpG3CSYz0xID1Zx927CzGT9o4/edit#heading=h.37jwww3odqqr>

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism is using someone else's ideas and works without properly crediting where we got that information from. During this class, we will engage with other people's ideas in different ways and have the opportunity to incorporate them into our own thought and creative processes. One of the many things that I hope we will learn in this class is how to create a citational practice that allows us to engage creatively with the ideas and works of others to produce our meaning. The only solution to plagiarism is citing and learning to differentiate what someone else said from what we said. To avoid plagiarism, you must cite or give credit whenever you use

- another person's idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—that any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge;
- quotations of another person's actual written words and/or spoken words; or
- paraphrase of another person's spoken or written words.

At the same time, in this class, we will be experimenting a lot with the potential of AI, making and imagining new technologies, and thinking of how we can use what is already there within our mediated environments to create something new. How can we transform what is already there and give it new meaning? What are the boundaries of plagiarising?

All creative work must be your original work made specifically for this course.

The UCSC “Official University Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate Students” can be found at: http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/undergraduate_students/Links to an external site.

Inclusion and Accessibility:

I am committed to making this class an inclusive and accessible online environment that respects everyone’s diversity. Is English your second or third language (this is the case for me as well)? Do you need accommodations to access learning materials? Are you better at writing than making? Are you taking care of a baby or family members? If at any time your learning in this class is affected by personal circumstances, reach out to me, and I will try my best to ensure your success.

CAMPUS SUPPORT RESOURCES

DRC Remote Accommodations:

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Small Group Tutoring

Small Group Tutoring (SGT) supports students academically to advance educational equity by designing inclusive learning environments outside of the classroom. In SGT, you can expect the Tutor to facilitate cooperative group activities designed to have students work together on the course content and develop study skills for the course. SGT is offered at least three times each week for the entire quarter. The Tutor is an undergraduate student who took the class, did well, and is trained to facilitate group sessions to focus on students’ needs to succeed in the course. SGT is open to all students enrolled in the class and they must sign up on our online system: TutorTrac. When students sign up for SGT, they are committing to attend every week.

Details at: <https://lss.ucsc.edu/index.html>

Title IX:

The [Title IX Office](#) is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process.

The Title IX Office is working remotely and is conducting meetings and interviews via zoom and phone. If you want to make a report or request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using their [online reporting link](#). For questions about making a report, your reporting responsibilities, and/or questions about the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) call 831-459-2462.