

## HIGR 243: Historical Scholarship in Technology

UCSD - Winter 2006  
Thursdays 9:30 AM - 12:20 PM, HSS 3086

Professor Emily Thompson  
HSS 4059 822.1532 emilyt@ucsd.edu Office Hours: Mon 1:30-3:00  
or by appt.

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This graduate course will introduce students to scholarly literature in the history of technology. Readings include classic texts as well as more recent scholarship, and demonstrate a variety of approaches to the task of thinking and writing about technology from a historical perspective.

**BOOKS:** The following books are available for purchase at the UCSD Bookstore. You are welcome to purchase them from any bookseller you choose. Copies are also on reserve in Geisel Library.

White, Lynn Jr. *Medieval Technology and Social Change*. 1962; Oxford U. Press, 1966.

Malone, Patrick. *The Skulking Way of War: Technology and Tactics Among the New England Indians*. 1991; Madison Books, 2000.

Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*. 1964; Oxford U. Press, 1999.

Smith, Merritt Roe. *Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology: The Challenge of Change*. 1977; Cornell U. Press, 1980.

Mackenzie, Donald. *Inventing Accuracy: A Historical Sociology of Nuclear Missile Guidance*. 1990; MIT Press, 1993.

Cowan, Ruth Schwartz. *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*. Basic Books, 1983.

Lupton, Ellen. *Mechanical Brides: Women and Machines from Home to Office*. Princeton Architectural Press, 1993.

Bray, Francesca. *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China*. Univ. California Press, 1997.

Downey, Greg. *Telegraph Messenger Boys: Labor, Technology, and Geography, 1850-1950*. Routledge, 2002.

Additional readings listed on the SCHEDULE below are available electronically, as e-journals or on e-reserve, through the library.

**FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS:** The course will generally require the focused reading of one or two books, plus a relevant article, per week. All students are required to complete all reading and be prepared to discuss it in class each week. Supplementary reading lists that expand on each week's topic or theme will also be distributed, to serve as a guide for those students wishing to read more comprehensively in the field.

All students are required to write two 800-word reviews of books selected from the list of required readings. The first review must be submitted on or before 9 February, and the second review is due on or before 9 March. The review should be written as if it were being submitted to a scholarly journal.

A final, 12-page paper is also required and is due Thursday 23 March, during Finals Week. This paper will be either A) a historiographical essay that reviews the scholarly literature on a technological topic relevant to the student's own interests; or B) a proposal for an introductory undergraduate course that deals with some aspect of the history of technology. Topics for this paper (either type) may be defined in a number of ways. For example, students may focus on the history of technology in a particular time period or national context; they may investigate a particular kind of technology; or they may review the ways that technology has been examined in other scholarly disciplines. Each student will define and execute their own project, which must be approved in advance by the Professor.

**GRADING:** In assigning final grades, the following weighting applies:

Seminar Participation:	35%
Book Reviews (2 @ 15%):	30%
Final Paper:	35%

**SCHEDULE:**

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT
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1	12 JAN	Course Introduction + Library Visit
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2	19 JAN	Technological Determinism and Environmental Approaches
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White, Lynn Jr., *Medieval Technology and Social Change*. (1962)  
 Chapters 1-2.

Malone, Patrick. *The Skulking Way of War* (1991).

Smith, Merritt Roe. "Technological Determinism in American Culture,"  
 pp. 1-35 in Smith and Leo Marx, eds. *Does Technology Drive History?* MIT,  
 1994. [e-reserve]

**SCHEDULE (cont.):**

WEEK DATE TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT

3 26 JAN Environmental Approaches and Literary Studies

Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden*. (1964)  
 Stine, Jeffrey and Joel Tarr. "At the Intersection of Histories: Technology and the Environment." *Technology and Culture* 39 (Oct 1998): 601-640. [e-journal]

4 2 FEB Social History / Labor History

Smith, Merritt Roe. *Harpers Ferry Armory* (1977).  
 Scranton, Philip. "None-too-Porous Boundaries: Labor History and the History of Technology." *Technology and Culture* 29 (October 1988): 722-743. [e-journal]

5 9 FEB Social Construction: **Book Review 1 Due**

Mackenzie, Donald. *Inventing Accuracy* (1990).  
 Winner, Langdon. "Upon Opening the Black Box and Finding it Empty: Social Construction and the Philosophy of Technology." *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 18 (1993): 362-378. [e-journal]

6 16 FEB Women and Work

Cowan, Ruth Schwartz. *More Work for Mother* (1983).  
 Lupton, Ellen. *Mechanical Brides* (1993).  
 Lerman, Nina and Arwen Mohun and Ruth Oldenziel, "The Shoulders We Stand On and the View from Here: Historiography and Directions for Research," *Technology and Culture* 38 (January 1997): 9-30. [e-journal]

7 23 FEB Reports on Journals in the Field

8 2 MAR Gender: Special Visitor Prof. Sarah Schneewind!

Bray, Francesca. *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power* (1997).

9 9 MAR Geography: **Book Review 2 Due**

Downey, Greg. *Telegraph Messenger Boys* (2002).

10 16 MAR Reports on Students' Final Papers

FINAL WEEK: **Final Papers Due THURS 23 MAR, 4:00 PM.**