



COURSE: CAR 400 SPECIAL TOPIC
WHAT IS A FEMINIST CYBER, TECHNOLOGICAL OR DIGITAL SPACE?
 SPRING 2006

Thursdays, 8:30AM - 018 Shaffer Art
 Instructor: Rebecca White
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 Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:30AM-12:30PM, 012 Shaffer Art

Texts:

Herland by Charlotte Perkins Gilman
 ISBN: 0486404293
 (Dover Thrift Edition)

Or download e-book:
<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ebooks/Glist.html>

Domain Errors!
Cyberfeminist Practices
 edited by Maria Fernandez, Faith Wilding and Michelle M. Wright
 ISBN: 1570271410
 (Autonomedia)

Course Reader
 Available at Electronic Publishing

Additional PDF Articles
 will be available for download on the server:
cgr.syr.edu

Choose one of the following pieces of science fiction wrote by a woman:

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
 ISBN: 0486282112
 (Dover Thrift Edition)

Or download e-book:
<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ebooks/Slist.html>

The Handmaid's Tale
 by Margaret Atwood
 ISBN: 038549081x
 (Anchorbooks)

the FeMale mAN
 by Joanna Russ
 ISBN: 0807062995

Proxies by Laura J. Mixon
 ISBN: 0812523873

Support by Pat Cardigan

Course Description and Objectives:

Students will be exposed to a number of feminist texts written about women's relationship to technology from the 20th and 21st centuries. Media created by and about women will be explored including television, film, advertising, art, etc. The first third of the semester will be spent setting up a socio-historical foundation that current theorists have built upon. We will specifically look at the effects of the industrial revolution, the movement of women into the workforce during WW2, the development of appliances and home technologies, and the development of communication and information technologies. About half of the semester will be spent exploring theories from the 1980s to the present. Topics include, but are not limited to cyborgs, cybernetics, cyberfantasy, MUDS, science/hi-tech fiction cyberfeminism, technofeminism, feminist perspectives on science and technology reproductive technologies, utopian and dystopian writings, transnationalism. Material will be drawn from fiction, media, art, cyberfeminists, transnational and postcolonial feminists, as well as a number of other authors, artists and theorists

Students will be asked to digest, analyze and explore contradictions (there are a lot of them), to challenge and discuss the readings and theories presented. Together we will explore how these theories apply to our own work as artists and members of our culture. Together we will explore these theories and ideas creatively as praxis (the practical application of our theory). The nature of the class is participatory and exploratory.

At the close of this seminar students will be able to think critically about issues of gender technology, virtuality and cyberspace. Students will also have developed skills to translate theoretical discussions and work into artistic praxis.

Attendance & Participation:

Students are expected to complete reading assignments and other preparatory assignments PRIOR to class. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and investigations. Students are expected to challenge ideas and to thoroughly analyze theories and ideas that are presented. Because the nature of this class is largely dependent upon the time we spend in class to digest the material, attendance is crucial and mandatory. Three (3) absences will result in a failing grade. Two late arrivals to class will be counted as one (1) absence.

Deadlines and Late work:

Readings and preparatory assignments are to be completed prior to class on Thursday morning, no exceptions. We are unable to have a meaningful discussion if the participants are not prepared. Late written and creative assignments will have five (5) points deducted for every day it is late.

Grading:

The grading schematic is to the right →

Grading Equivalencies	The Break Down	
A 94-100	Class Discussions	25
A- 90-93	Weblog/Blackboard/	
B+ 87-89	Creative Responses	15
B 84-86		
B- 80-83	Creative Project	25
C+ 77-79	(collaboration encouraged)	
C 74-76		
C- 70-73	Assignments (3)	25
D 65-69		
F 0-65	Theorist Webpage	10

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 WHAT IS A FEMINIST CYBER, TECHNOLOGICAL OR DIGITAL SPACE?
 SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Additional Info/Reading

Week 1: Studying Gender & Technology
 (Jan 19)

Cybernetics:
Zeros and Ones by Sadie Plant

Week 2: Utopias: Creative Work As Praxis
 (Jan 26) **Due:** Herland

Cyberfeminism:

Bitch Mutant by VNS Matrix

Week 3: Gender and the Invention & Production of Technology
 (Feb 2) **Due:** *Fatherland: Masculinity, Technology and the Doll Economy 1860-1908* from The Material Culture of Gender/The Gender of Material Culture by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames.

The Future is FeMail: Some thoughts on the Aesthetics and Politics of Cyberfeminism by Verena Kuni

Gender and Genius: the Auto Industry and Femininity from The Material Culture of Gender/The Gender of Material Culture by Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames.

Male Designs on Technology in Technofeminism by Judy Wajcman

Articles on Female Inventors

The Truth About Cyberfeminism by Cornelia Sollfrank

Week 4: Domestic Technologies
 (Feb 9) **Due:** Analysis of Advertisements

Cyberpunk/Sci-Fi Authors:

Kathy Acker
 Octavia E. Butler
 Marion Zimmer Bradley
 Pat Cardigan
 Anne Carlisle
 Katie Hafner
 Elizabeth Hand
 Ursula Le Guin
 Shariann Lewitt
 Lisa Mason
 Ann McCaffrey
 Catherine L. Moore
 Pat Murphy
 Marcy Piercy
 Melissa Scott
 Mary Shelley
 Amy Thompson
 Joan D. Vinge
 Chelsea Quinn Yarbo

Excerpt from More Work for Mother by Ruth Schwartz Cowan

Selection from *Domestic Technology: Labour-saving or Enslaving?* From Feminism Confronts Technology by Judy Wajcman.

Excerpts from The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities by Dolores Hayden.

Women Designers: Making Differences by Nancy Perkins in Design and Feminism: Re-Visioning Spaces, Places and Everyday Things.

Screening: Stepford Wives

Week 5: Women, Computers, and Cybernetics
 (Feb 16) **Due:** *The Future Looms: Weaving Women and Cybernetics* in Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment by Sadie Plant

Cyborgs:
Envisioning Cyborg Bodies: Notes from Current Research by Jennifer Gonzalez in Cybersexualities: A Reader in Feminist Theory, Cyborgs and Cyberspace.

On the Matrix: Cyberfeminist Simulations by Sadie Plant in The Cybercultures Reader.

Women's 1st Roles in the 20th Century Computer World: The ENIAC
<http://www.blueproof.com/Colloquium/eniac.html>

Assorted News Articles on Microchips, Asia & Silicon Valley

Cyberspace:
"Analoging" the Digital, Digitizing the Analog: Contemplations on Communities of Production and Virtuality by Rhadika Gajjala and Annapurna Mamidipudi in Domain Errors!

Week 6: Investigating Virtual Space
(Feb 23) Due: Web Analysis

The Woman Question: Addressing Women as Internet Users by Susanna Paasonen in [Domain Errors!](#)

Is Cyberspace Colorblind? By Maria Fernandez

Utopian Promises—Net Realities from [Flesh Machine](#) by the Critical Art Ensemble

Week 7: Cyborgs & Bodies
(Mar 2) Due: *The Cyborg Mommy's User Manual* by Pattie Belle Hastings in [Domain Errors!](#)

A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the late Twentieth Century in [Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: the Reinvention of Nature](#) by Donna Haraway

Week 8: Cyberfeminisms
(Mar 9) Due: *In the Beginning...* by Delanie Woodlock

Cyberfeminism: Pre-Theories by Delanie Woodlock

Situating Cyberfeminisms by Maria Fernandez and Faith Wilding in [Domain Errors!](#)

100 Antithesis of Cyberfeminism from the 1st International Conference

Where is the Feminism in Cyberfeminism? By Faith Wilding

A Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century by VNS Matrix

The Political Condition of Cyberfeminism Faith Wilding & CAE

Cyberfeminism With a Difference by Rosi Braidotti

Week 9: NO CLASS SPRING BREAK (Mar 16)

Week 10: Sci-Fi/Cyberpunk by Women
(Mar 23) Due: *Feminist Science Fiction & "Classic Cyberpunk"* by Austin Booth & Mary Flanagan in [Reload: Rethinking Women & Cyberculture.](#)

Read one of the Following
[Frankenstein](#) by Mary Shelley
[The Handmaid's Tale](#) by Margaret Atwood
[The Female Man](#) by Joanna Russ
[Synners](#) Pat Cardigan
[Proxies](#) by Laura J. Mixon

Week 11: Virtual Identity
(Mar 30) Due: *Virtuality and its Discontents Rethinking Identity Through Virtual Community* by Sherry Turkle

MUDer? I Hardly Know 'Er! Adventures of a Feminist MUDer by Lori Kendall in [wired_women](#)

A Rape in Cyberspace by Julian Dibbel

Romancing The Anti-Body: Lust and Longing in (Cyber)space by Lynn Hershman Leeson

Domesticity:
[Pink Think: Becoming a Woman in Many Uneasy Lessons](#) by Lynn Peril.

Genetics:
Cultures of Eugenics pamphlet by subRosa

A Summary History of Eugenic Theories and Practices in the United States by Emily de Araujo and Lucia Sommer in [Domain Errors!](#)

Inside Infertility by Amelia Jones in [Domain Errors!](#)

Gender & Tech.:
Masculinity, Dualisms, and High Technology by Doreen Massey in [Bodyspace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality](#)

Virtually Female: Body and Code by Margaret Morse in [Processed Lives: Gender and Technology in Everyday Life](#)

Smothered by Invention: the Masculinity of Technology by Erik Arnold & Wendy Faulkner in [Smothered by Invention: Technology in Women's Lives](#)

Race & Tech:
Racial Representation of Computer Users in Prime-Time Advertising by Katherine Kinnick, Candace White & Kadesha Washington.

Virtual Body:
Virtual Corporeality: A Feminist View by Zoe Sophia in [Cybersexualities: A Reader in Feminist Theory, Cyborgs, and Cyberspace](#)

Constructions and Reconstructions of Self in Virtual Reality: Playing in the MUDS by Sherry Turkle

Week 12: TBA

Week 13: BIO Technologies

(Apr 13) Due: *Reproductive Technology: Delivered into Men's Hands* from Feminism Confronts Technology by Judy Wajcman

Stolen Rhetoric: The Appropriation of Choice by ART Industries by subRosa in Domain Errors!

Sex and Gender Ed for the Biotech Century by subRosa in Domain Errors!

So You Wanna Be a Cyborg Mommy? Queer Identity and the New Reproductive Technologies by Tania Kupczak in Domain Errors!

Consider a New Career by Hyla Willis in Domain Errors!

Transsexuality: The Postmodern Body and/as Technology by Susan Stryker in The Cybercultures Reader.

Week 14: Global Implications

(Apr 20) *Racism, Technology, and the Limits of Western Knowledge* by Michelle M. Wright in Domain Errors!

Talking: Cyberfantasies and the Relations of Power in Global Obscenities: Patriarchy, Capitalism, and the Lure of Cyberfantasy by Zillah Eisenstein

Where Do You Want TO GO Today?: Cybernetic Tourism, the Internet and Transnationality by Lisa Nakamura in Race in Cyberspace

New Sciences: Cyborg Feminism and the Methodology of the Oppressed by Chela Sandoval in The Cybercultures Reader.

Week 15: TBA

(Apr 27)

Women & Computers:
Women and Computers: An Introduction by Ruth Perry and Lisa Gerber in Signs (16(1) (1990):74-101)

Women & Science:
Modest Witness@Second Millennium.FemaleMan© Meets OncoMouse™ by Donna Haraway

Race and Gender: The Role of Analogy in Science by Nancy Leys Stephan in Feminism and Science

New Sciences: Cyborg Feminism and the Methodology of the Oppressed by Chela Sandoval in Cybersexualities: A reader in Feminist Theory, Cyborgs, and Cyberspace

Postmodern Procreation: Representing Reproductive Practice by Sarah Franklin in Science as Culture ((4/17) (1993): 522-561)