This course offers critical interdisciplinary perspectives on the development of technological culture. Western ideals of progress and enlightenment have been increasingly invested in technological progress and the capacity to know and to communicate through technological means. Technology bears a particularly important relationship to temporality, simultaneously placing its users in a heightened present and displacing that present with anticipations of the future. “Culture and Technology” compares critical approaches to technology in modern western culture, and considers how such approaches situate technology in relationship to time, past, present and future. The template of temporality allows us to explore diverse roles of technology in the making and unmaking of culture, citizenship and the self.

Our task will be to mine critical literature on culture and technology, to find where and how technology locates nostalgia, hope, diversity, rationality, magic and dread, and to relate these two themes in critical discussion on culture, technology and the mediation of time.

Course readings are to be supplemented with critical responses to texts in diverse media.

**Required Texts**

Berland (ed), Humanities 6302 *Coursebook* 2008.

General reference (on reserve)

**Evaluation**

This course centres on readings and discussions in a seminar format. Preparation of readings for discussion is essential to its success. Evaluation of students is based on the following:

Participation (including presentation of readings), 20%
Book, film, art review essay, 30%
Final essay (including essay proposal, prerequisite for essay but not independently graded), 50%
Schedule of readings

September 9  Introduction

September 16  Foundational texts
Aristotle (ch 2), Marx and Engels (ch 7), Ellul (ch 16), Mumford (ch 29) and Arendt (ch 30), Philosophy of Technology (PT).

September 23  Defining technology

September 30  Defining themes
Steven Kern, The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918. chapters 1-4.

October 7.  Defining themes, continued
Kern, Culture of Time and Space, chapters 5-7; Marinetti, “The Futurist Manifesto”

October 14.  Meeting Heidegger.
“The Question Concerning Technology,” PT.

October 21  Heidegger continued and in discussion.
Scharff, Ihde, Feenberg, Chapters 24, 25, 28, PT.

October 28  Meeting Latour.
Latour, We Have Never Been Modern, 1-90.

November 4  Cyborgs.

November 11 Creative Technologies

November 18  The Logic of Simulation
Albert Borgmann, “Information and Reality at the Turn of the Century,” PT chapter 47.

November 25. **Cultural technologies at war**  
Kern, *Culture of Time and Space*, Chapter 11  

December 2 **Technology, culture and the natural world**  

**Additional Recommended Readings**


**Fiction:**


Piercy, Marge. *He, She and It*. Fawcett Crest, 1993.