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PSYCHOTECHNOGRAPHIES: THE PHANTASMATIC LIFE OF MACHINES

Michaelmas Term 2016
Prof. Steven Connor

Course Structure: 6 x 1.5 hr seminars running in weeks 2-7 of Michaelmas Term.

Essays: Students are invited to devise their own essay subjects, arising from, responding to, or extending the ideas and arguments of the course.

Overview

There is a continuing work of imagining involved in the workings of all machines, such that one might say that all machines are in fact imaginary machines. This is not of course to say that no machines in fact exist. Rather it is to see acts and arts of imagining, and the spectrum of comportments and affective investments they convoke, as essential to the ways in which machines are 'existed', in Jean-Paul Sartre's transitive usage – that is, made to exist, brought to and kept in existence, made livable, and even, often, lovable. If all technographies, the ways we write and picture machines, are suffused with fantasy and affect, they must therefore also be seen as psychotechnographies. It is these affective and phantasmatic investments through acts of writing that will be examined in this course.

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http://www.fcsh.unl.pt/docentes/rmonteiro/pdf/The_Man_in_the_Moone.pdf
Charles Dickens, 'The Signal-Man' (1866), _Selected Short Fiction_, ed. Deborah Thomas (London: Penguin, 1985), pp. 78-90. Online (eg) at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1289/1289-h/1289-h.htm#page312
George Langelaan, 'The Fly' (1957)

2. Automata

Edgar Allan Poe, 'Maelzel's Chess Player' (1836), _Essays and Reviews_, ed. G.R. Thompson (New York: Library of America, 1984), pp. 1253-76. Online at http://www.eapoe.org/works/essays/maelzel.htm
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3. Chronographs

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Henry Adams, 'The Dynamo and the Virgin' (1900), in _The Education of Henry Adams_ (London: Penguin, 1995), pp. 360-70. Online at http://www.bartleby.com/159/25.html
E.M. Forster, 'The Machine Stops' (1909). Online at (eg)
http://archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/prajlich/forster.html

4. Influencing Machines

John Haslam, _Illustrations of Madness: Exhibiting a Singular Case of Insanity and a No Less Remarkable_

Difference in Medical Opinion; Developing the Nature of Assailment, and the Manner of Working Events; With a Description of the Tortures Experienced by Bomb-Bursting, Lobster-Cracking, and Lengthening the Brain (London: G. Hayden, 1810) Online at wellcomelibrary.org/item/b20458265

Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, trans. Ida Macalpine and Richard A, Hunter (New York: New York Review Books, 2000) [Extracts to be supplied]

Victor Tausk, 'On the Origin of the "Influencing Machine" in Schizophrenia' (1919), repr. *Journal of Psychotherapy Practice and Research*, 1 (1992), 185-206. Online at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3330285/pdf/184.pdf

5. Automatic Writing
Anna C. Brackett, 'The Strange Tale of a Type-Writer', *Harper's Monthly*, 81 (1890): 679-98. Online at https://www.unz.org/Pub/Harpers-1890oct-00679
Leon M. Solomons and Gertrude Stein, 'Normal Motor Automatism', *Psychological Review*, 3 (1896): 492-512. Online at
http://wexler.free.fr/library/files/solomons%20(1896)%20normal%20motor%20automatism.pdf
Olive Pratt Rayner [Grant Allen], *The Typewriter Girl* (London: C. Arthur Pearson, 1897) Online at https://archive.org/details/cihm_05084 [Extracts to be supplied]
Franz Kafka, 'In the Penal Colony' (1914), trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, in *The Complete Stories*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), pp. 140–167

6. Phonotechnics
Florence McLandburgh, 'The Automaton Ear', in *The Automaton Ear, and Other Sketches* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg and Co., 1876), pp. 7-43. Online at
http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/mclandburgh/automaton/ear.html
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Further Reading
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Bettina Brand-Claussen and Inge Jadi, *Beyond Reason: Art and Psychosis - Works from the Prinzhorn Collection* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1996)

Vera Bühlmann, 'How to Theorize Technology Today?' *Monas Oikos Nomos*, November 7th, 2012. Online at https://monasandnomos.org/2012/11/07/how-to-theorize-technology-today/

 Vera Bühlmann and Ludger Hovestadt, eds, *Printed Physics: Metalithikum I* (Basel/Berlin/Boston: Ambra, 2013)
---, *Domesticating Symbols: Metalithikum II* (Basel/Berlin/Boston: Ambra, 2014)
Vera Bühlmann, Ludger Hovestadt and Vahid Moosavi, eds, *Coding as Literacy Metalithikum III* (Basel/Berlin/Boston: Ambra, 2015)

Steven Connor, *Dumbstruck: A Cultural History of Ventriloquism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

------------------, *Technographies.* Online at http://stevenconnor.com/technographies.html

Erik Davis, *TechGnosis: Myth, Magic and Mysticism in the Age of Information* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1999)

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Jaques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Random House, 1964)

Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948) Online at http://biopolitics.kom.uni.st/Siegfried%20Giedion/Mechanization%20Takes%20Command_%20A%20Contribution%20to%20Anonymous%20History%20(143)/Mechanization%20Takes%20Command_%20A%20Contributio%20-%20Siegfried%20Giedion.pdf

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Paul Grimstad, 'Antebellum AI: "Maelzel's Chess-Player" and Poe's Reverse Constraints', *Poetics Today*, 31 (2010): 107-25 online at http://poeticstoday.dukejournals.org/content/31/1/107.full.pdf

Sam Halliday, *Science and Technology in the age of Hawthorne, Melville, Twain and James: Thinking and Writing Electricity* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007)

Mike Jay, *The Influencing Machine: James Tilly Matthews and the Air Loom Gang* (London: Strange Attractor. 2012)

Humphrey Jennings, *Pandaemonium 1660-1886: The Coming of the Machine as Seen by Contemporary Observers*, ed. Marie-Louise Jennings and Charles Madge (London: Icon Books, 2000)

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Tamara Ketabgian, *The Lives of Machines: The Industrial Imaginary in Victorian Literature and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011)

Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999) Online at https://monoskop.org/images/7/73/Kittler_Friedrich_Gramophone_Film_Typewriter.pdf

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Jeffrey Sconce, *Haunted Media: Electronic Presence from Telegraphy to Television* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2000)

Michel Serres, 'Les nouvelles technologies: révolution culturelle et cognitive', online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCBB0QEmT5g English transcript by Vera Bühlemann, online at https://monasandnomos.org/2012/11/07/michel-serres-revolution-cognitive-et-culturelle-engl-translation/

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Gaby Wood, *Living Dolls: A Magical History of the Quest for Mechanical Life* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002)

Neil Longley York, *Mechanical Metamorphosis: Technological Change in Revolutionary America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1987)