



Byrne Seminar 01:090:101:05

Fall 2016

Dreams of (Human) Machines

Tuesdays, 2:50-4:10pm

AB 2150

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Office Hours: Thus, 3-4:30pm

This seminar examines the role of machines and automatons in regard to the modernist crisis of representation, the fantasy of artificial procreation, and the connection between art and life. Beginning with a discussion of E. T. A. Hoffmann's horror story "The Sandman" and several key passages of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, we will investigate the ways in which dreams of human machines are linked to ways to overcome a loss; we will then look at the ways in which 19th century hysterics and their doctors influenced each other; try to make sense of Dada sound poems and the Surrealist concept of "automatic writing," read Franz Kafka's story "In the Penal Colony," travel to the Philadelphia Museum of Art to see Marcel Duchamp's famous installation *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)*, and view science fiction films such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*.

Purchase:

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Dover Publications, 1994). **ISBN-10:** 0486282112 **ISBN-13:** 978-0486282114
- Sigmund Freud/Joseph Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria* (Penguin Classics, 2004). **ISBN-10:** 0142437492 **ISBN-13:** 978-0142437490

All other class materials are either uploaded on Sakai (Resources) or accessible online (via links in the class schedule)

Class Schedule:

Week 1 (Sep 6)

Introduction: The Black Box

*film clip: Kubrick, *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968)

Week 9 (Sep 13)

The Uncanny

E. T. A. Hoffmann, "The Sandman" (1816)

Week 2 (Sep 27)

Frankenstein

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus* (1818), chapters 1-5, reading the whole novel is recommended

Week 3 (Oct 4)

Hysteria

Sigmund Freud/Joseph Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria* (excerpts)

*film clip: Alice Winocour, *Augustine* (2012)

1st response paper due (3-4 pages)

Week 4 (Oct 11)

"Dada": War Machine and Humans

Hugo Ball, *Tenderenda* (1915/1922), excerpts, and sound poems

Week 5 (Oct 18)

"Surrealism": Automatic Writing and Montage

André Breton: "The Automatic Message"; *short film: Hans Richter, *Ghosts Before Breakfast* (1928)

Week 6 (Oct 25)

The Vamp and the Machine

film: Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (1927) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Za2ALUI97EA>

Siegfried Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament"

2nd response paper due (3-4 pages)

Week 7 (Nov 1)

EXCURSION: Duchamp's *Great Glass in the Philadelphia Museum of Art*

Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* (excerpts)

Week 8 (Nov 8)

Torture Machines

Franz Kafka, "In the Penal Colony"

Week 10 (Nov 16)

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?

film: Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner* (rent or buy on Amazon Instant)

3rd response paper due (3-4 pages)