

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
Winter I 2009

TSED 508a (031): Seminar on Bruno Latour and Science & Technology Studies (STS)

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Course Description:

This seminar focuses on Bruno Latour, arguably *the* most creative and challenging scholar of Science & Technology Studies (STS) in the world today. Latour's reputation and scholarship traverses an extremely wide range of disciplines in addition to STS (e.g., anthropology, art, education, environmental studies, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, sociology, theology, etc.). We will focus on four of Latour's most recent texts: *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993), *Pandora's Hope* (1999), *The Politics of Nature* (2004), and *Reassembling the Social* (2005). The seminar is interdisciplinary and inviting by design, and students from any and all disciplines are encouraged to enroll. We will work systematically through these texts to closely examine Latour's strategies for doing STS— for researching science, technology, and technoscience as problems in what Haraway calls naturecultures and Stengers calls cosmopolitics.

Texts (Required):

1. Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern* (trans. Catherine Porter). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
2. Latour, B. (1999). *Pandora's hope: Essays on the reality of science studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. Latour, B. (2004). *The politics of nature: How to bring the sciences into democracy* (trans. Catherine Porter). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
4. Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Valued Ends of the Course:

My intention is to help you develop a background for understanding Bruno Latour's work in Science and Technology Studies and various additional disciplines. A major effort will be in providing you with the background for researching science, technology, and technoscience as problems in what Haraway calls naturecultures and Stengers calls cosmopolitics.

Assessment:

1. Participation in Seminar & Research Activities (10%)
2. Seminar Leadership (groups of 2) (30%)
3. Scholarly Essay (Publishable) (60%)

Course Schedule & Readings: Each class generally consists of activities, readings, and discussion.

Date	Topic	Readings
8 Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Symmetry v. Reductionism Law of Participation Hybridity 	Syllabus
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “No Mediation Without Representation” 	<i>We Have Never Been Modern</i>
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “United We Stand in Nature...” 	<i>We Have Never Been Modern</i>
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science Wars 	<i>Pandora’s Hope</i> Bloor, “Anti-Latour”
6 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labyrinths 	<i>Pandora’s Hope</i>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factions 	<i>Pandora’s Hope</i>
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Ecology 	<i>Politics of Nature</i> Restivo, “Politics of Laour”
27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Naturecultures 	<i>Politics of Nature</i> Restivo, “Politics of Laour”
3 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cosmopolitics 	<i>Politics of Nature</i> Latour, “Why has critique run out of steam”
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ANT 	<i>Reassembling the Social</i> Fraser, “The ethics or reality and virtual reality”
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Society Must be Defended 	<i>Reassembling the Social</i>
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collectivity Must Be Materialized 	<i>Reassembling the Social</i>
1 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Essays 	

Weeks 2-4

We Have Never Been Modern

Readings / Media:

- Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern* (trans. Catherine Porter). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weeks 5-6

Pandora’s Hope

- Latour, B. (1999). *Pandora’s hope: Essays on the reality of science studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bloor, D. (1999). Anti-Latour. *Studies in and History and Philosophy of Science*, 30(1), 81-112.

Weeks 7-9
Politics of Nature

1. Latour, B. (2004). *The politics of nature: How to bring the sciences into democracy* (trans. Catherine Porter). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
2. Restivo, S. (2004). Politics of Latour. *Organization and Environment*, 18(1), 111-115.

Weeks 10-12
Reassembling the Social

1. Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Fraser, M. (2006). The ethics of reality and virtual reality: Latour, facts, and values. *History of the Human Sciences*, 19(2), 45-72.

Assessment:

Seminar Leadership (30%)— Choose one book on the schedule and coordinate the discussions for two weeks. It will be your responsibility to clearly re/present the readings, and to move the discussions through the book. Please draw on the approach indicated below. For the discussion that you lead, please prepare to:

1. Outline the chapters and book.
2. Define key terms or methodological and theoretical concepts that are challenging.
3. Provide handouts, discussion questions and presentation media for clarifying the readings.
4. Provide one published review of the book to share with the group.
5. Moderate and bring closure to the readings.

Scholarly Essay (60%)— Choose a topic or problem in STS and write a scholarly paper exploring Latour's work. The topic can be one that you are already working through. The essay should provide a clear, cogent, concise exploration or case study of STS and Latour. Take a position (state a thesis or argument) and provide evidence, through examples and narrative, to support the position.

Assessment: (Limit to 15-20, tight well-written double-spaced pages including title page (limit to 4000-5000 words + references))

1. Clarity of communication/writing
 - a. Is the writing clear and concise?
 - b. Are the ideas focused and organized?
2. Development of argument / thesis
 - a. Is the argument coherent? Thoughtful? Analytical? Critical? Sophisticated?
3. Exploration of content and theory
 - a. Is there evidence of critically and theoretically exploring the issues?
 - b. Are the ideas theorized, synthesized, extended or applied?
4. Examples
 - a. Are examples sufficient? Do examples ground the paper?
 - b. Are there narrative examples?
5. Grammar & Style
 - a. Organization, sentence structure, paragraphs, spelling
 - b. APA, MLA, or Chicago Style (format, endnotes, references)

*Please periodically update the group on your progress throughout the term. Please also present your paper (as completed or a work in progress) at a designated time during the last 3-4 weeks of the term.

Grading Guidelines

Approved July 2008

A level - Good to Excellent Work

- A+ (90-100%) A very high level of quality throughout every aspect of the work. It shows the individual (or group) has gone well beyond what has been provided and has extended the usual ways of thinking and/or performing. Outstanding comprehension of subject matter and use of existing literature and research. Consistently integrates critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. The work shows a very high degree of engagement with the topic.
- A (85-89%) Generally a high quality throughout the work. No problems of any significance, and evidence of attention given to each and every detail. Very good comprehension of subject and use of existing literature and research. For the most part, integrates critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. Shows a high degree of engagement with the topic.
- A- (80-84%) Generally a good quality throughout the work. A few problems of minor significance. Good comprehension of subject matter and use of existing literature and research. Work demonstrates an ability to integrate critical and creative perspectives on most occasions. The work demonstrates a reasonable degree of engagement with the topic.

B level - Adequate Work

- B+ (76-79%) Some aspects of good quality to the work. Some problems of minor significance. There are examples of integrating critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. A degree of engagement with the topic.
- B (72-75%) Adequate quality. A number of problems of some significance. Difficulty evident in the comprehension of the subject material and use of existing literature and research. Only a few examples of integrating critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. Some engagement with the topic.
- B- (68-71%) Barely adequate work at the graduate level.

NOTE: For UBC's Faculty of Graduate Studies (FOGS), a final mark below 68% for Doctoral students and below 60% for Masters students is the equivalent of a Failing mark.

C & D level - Seriously Flawed Work

- C (55-67%) Serious flaws in understanding of the subject *material*. Minimal integration of critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. Inadequate engagement with the topic. Inadequate work at the graduate level.

D level

- D (50-54%)

F level - Failing Work

- F (0-49%)

Participation— Please remember that you have a responsibility to do the readings and participate in discussions. We refer to the scholarly level of participation as **academic conversation**. Students often get anxious over academic work and the charge that they are “talking from nowhere.” The other extreme is “talking from everywhere,” a form of what Donna Haraway called a “God trick.” “Talking from somewhere” is the goal— this somewhere may be your experience and narrative (with examples) or it may be from what you’ve read or from the theory we are addressing. We want you to theorize and this is different than merely providing your opinion, which is what so many professors dislike. There is a difference between your narrative or experience and opinion. So, participation entails a variety of things including academic conversation, articulation and presentation. **Read for Meaning along with Purpose...**

Participation is interdependent with **preparation** for each class session, which involves *reading* (highlighting, pagination post-its, margin notes, comments & questions, etc.), *writing* (note-taking,

outlining, questioning, defining, mapping, framing, summarizing, journaling, blogging, exposition, etc.), *organizing* (documenting, labeling, ordering, archiving, filing, etc.) and *reflection* (rethinking, reincorporating, remapping, analyzing, synthesizing, etc.). One goal of preparation is to sustain increasingly sophisticated academic conversations or engagement with the readings, course and peers. A second goal is to develop systematic approaches for engaging with the readings and your peers (i.e., developing reading, writing, organizing, and reflection form(at)s and styles that are effective).

Journals in Science and Technology Studies

1. *Appropriate Technology*
2. *Appropriate Technology Journal*
3. *Alternatives: Technology and Ecology*
4. *Antipode*
5. *Architecture*
6. *Architecture Digest*
7. *Architecture and Ideas*
8. *Architecture and Planning*
9. *Architectural History*
10. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*
11. *Business History Review*
12. *Computers and Society*
13. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*
14. *Design Issues*
15. *Design Studies*
16. *Environmental Science and Technology*
17. *Enterprise and Society*
18. *Ethics and Information Technology*
19. *Futurist*
20. *History and Technology*
21. *Humanities and Technology Review*
22. *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*
23. *Information and Behavior*
24. *Information, Communication and Society*
25. *Information Polity*
26. *Information Society*
27. *Iterations*
28. *Journal of Cultural Geography*
29. *Journal of Design History*
30. *Journal of Historical Geography*
31. *Journal of Material Culture*
32. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*
33. *Journal of Urban Technology*
34. *Invention and Technology (American Heritage)*
35. *ISIS*
36. *Labor History*
37. *Labor's Heritage*
38. *Labor Studies Journal*
39. *Osiris*
40. *Perspectives on Science*
41. *Philosophy of Science*
42. *Public Understanding of Science*
43. *Science and Society*
44. *Science and Technology Studies*
45. *Science as Culture*
46. *Science, Technology and Human Values*
47. *Science and Culture*
48. *Science and Public Policy*
49. *Science in Context*
50. *Social Studies of Science*
51. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*
52. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*
53. *Technology and Society*
54. *Technology in Society*
55. *Technology Studies*
56. *Techne*
57. *Technology and Culture*
58. *Technology and Society Magazine (IEEE)*
59. *Transactions of the Newcomen Society*

Journals in Cultural Studies and New Media Studies

1. *Bad Subjects*
2. *Communication Research*
3. *Communication Review*
4. *Convergence*
5. *Cultural Dynamics*
6. *Culture Machine (On-line)*
7. *Cultural Studies*
8. *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*
9. *Cultural Studies from Birmingham*
10. *Cultural Trends*
11. *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*
12. *Journal of Popular Culture*
13. *Journal of Urban and Cultural Studies*
14. *M/C (On-line)*
15. *Postmodern Culture (On-line)*
16. *Public Culture*
17. *Social Text*
18. *American Film*
19. *Block*
20. *Camera Obscura*
21. *Canadian Journal of Communication*
22. *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*
23. *Cinema Canada*
24. *Critical Musicology*
25. *Educational Screen*
26. *Feminist Media Studies*
27. *Film Criticism*
28. *Film History*
29. *Film Quarterly*
30. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*
31. *Information Design Journal*
32. *Journal of Communication*
33. *Journal of Film and Video*
34. *Journal of Popular Film*
35. *Journal of University Film*
36. *Media Culture and Society*
37. *Mediamatic (On-line)*
38. *Media Ecology (On-line)*
39. *Media Studies Journal (On-line)*
40. *Media History*
41. *Music Analysis*
42. *New Media & Society*
43. *New Media Age*
44. *New Media Creative*
45. *New Media Markets*
46. *New Media Week*
47. *Parallax*
48. *Perspectives of New Music*
49. *Semiotica*
50. *Screen*
51. *Screen Sight and Sound*
52. *Taboo: Journal of Culture and Education*
53. *24 Images*
54. *Wide Angle*

