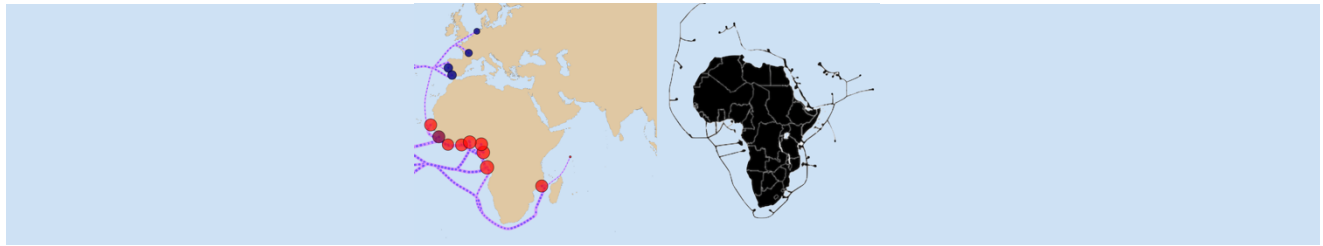


INF1501H - Introduction to Culture & Technology

Fall 2025

Tuesdays, 1pm-3pm – **MY 330** | Fridays, 1pm-2pm – **BL 224**



New frontiers of digital colonialism¹

Instructors

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Office Hours: Thursday-Friday by appointment.

Teaching Assistant: TBD

TBD

Office Hours: TBD

Acknowledgement of Traditional Land

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Course Description

This course introduces ideas, readings, and research approaches that will help students examine the nexus of culture and technology. The course functions primarily as an introduction for students in the Culture & Technology concentration of the Master of Information program, but it provides knowledge and skills for any students exploring fields such as science and technology studies, critical media studies, digital humanities, media archaeology, cultural studies, and other established and emerging approaches to culture and technology. Readings and lectures will provide critical perspectives on received concepts such as technology, culture, and information, drawing on philosophical, sociological, anthropological, historical, literary, artistic, or other relevant approaches for these topics.

¹ Side-by-side comparison of the major regions and ports involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1500–1900 (left) and a map showing the geographical field of Google and Meta’s undersea cable lines along the African coast (right). Inspiration and images sourced from: Mwema, Esther, and Abeba Birhane. 2024. “Undersea Cables in Africa: The New Frontiers of Digital Colonialism.” First Monday, ahead of print, April 14. <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v29i4.13637>.

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Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and related Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Students who have successfully completed this course will be able to:

CLO	Related PLO
Outline the history of thought and debate about the relationship of culture and technology	Students develop an understanding of the development of theory concerning information, where it is found, and how it is used.
Evaluate theoretical and methodological approaches that converge at the intersection of culture and technology, and understand how different approaches reinforce, complement, and contradict each other.	Students understand and are conversant with fundamental concepts, theories, practices, and the diverse horizons of information disciplines, and can respond to changing information practices and needs of society
Apply concepts learned in the course to intervene effectively in debates about how culture and technology are co-constructed in the present.	Students develop the ability to contribute through research and publication, to the continuous expansion and critical assessment of the body of knowledge underlying the information and archives sciences.
Adapt theoretical and critical approaches to contexts where culture, technology, information, and materiality interact, in preparation for careers requiring broad knowledge translation.	Students develop knowledge and values appropriate to their future exercise of economic, cultural, and/or social leadership, and thereby provide leadership in defining the social responsibility of information professionals to provide information services for all, regardless of age, educational level, or social, cultural, or ethnic background.
	Students develop an understanding of the application of new technological developments to the preservation and communication of information, and in the identification of the impact of such developments on society.
	Students continue in life-long intellectual growth beyond graduation.

Assessments

The course assessments are designed to be learning experiences in their own right. They highlight the entanglement of theory and practice, specifically using reading, dialogue, planning, writing, and reflection as fundamental components of the course deliverables. Students will be assessed based on the evidence they produce of intellectually engaging with these assignments and reaching our CLOs.

Assignment Overview		
Name or Category	Due Date	% of final grade
Course Catalogue	26 Sep, 24 Oct, 28 Nov	20
Monday Night Seminar Report	08 Dec	15
Object Research Journal	06 Nov	25
Final Production	08 Dec	40

Assignment Descriptions

More details and rubrics will be available on Quercus. Students are not guaranteed to receive feedback on assessed material before the drop deadline. Check the “Late submission policy” for more details.

Course Catalogue (CC)

Goal: assess students' achievement of outlining the contents of the course and of *critically* evaluating concepts, approaches, debates and methodologies studied in the course (CLOs 1 and 2)

Throughout the term, students will maintain a handwritten journal and collect physical materials that document their learning journey in INF1501. These will be compiled into a physical binder that tells the story of what they learned, how they engaged with course concepts, and how their thinking evolved. The binder will include peer annotations, labelled artifacts with provenance, and responses to in-class writing prompts organized in a coherent narrative.

Check-ins: Students will submit portions of their Catalogue after finishing of Units I and II.

The catalogue will be evaluated based on Content Mastery; Reflective Thinking; Material Integration; and Presentation, Narrative & Formalities.

Note on costs: A binder, 400 sheets and a pen can be purchased for less than C\$10.

Monday Night Seminar Report

Goal: assess the student's application of the course's concepts to current events, debates, scholarship and creative outputs. (CLO 3)

During the semester, students will attend at least one public seminar or event hosted by the [Centre for Culture and Technology](#) and write a critical report (1,000–1,500 words) applying course concepts to the seminar's content. The report will be evaluated on the demonstration of Application of Course Concepts; Analysis & Engagement; Use of Evidence; and Writing, Structure & Formalities.

Seminars occur monthly on a Monday night. If you are unable to attend any of the scheduled events due to your accommodation needs, we can consider alternatives.

Object Research Journal (ORJ)

Goal: Assess the student's achievement in outlining and adapting *critical* C&T Theories, Methodologies and Approaches to their interests and expertise. (CLOs 1 and 4)

Students will select a physical, portable object and document its cultural-technological significance through a research journal. The journal includes observations, interviews, data, scholarly references, and theoretical analysis, and prepares students for a final creative output. Overlap between the Course Catalogue and the ORJ is allowed. Evaluation criteria will be Object Framing; Research Depth; Theoretical Integration; Reflection & Insight; and Documentation, Structure & Formalities.

Final Production

Goal: Assess the student's achievement in producing creative outputs by applying and adapting *critical* C&T Theories, Methodologies, and Approaches to current debates and their interests and expertise. (CLOs 3 and 4).

Building on the ORJ and considering discussions from Weeks 8 to 11, students will produce a creative output that applies and adapts theories from Culture & Technology. Outputs may include writing, design, multimedia, visual art, or performance. A short reflective statement (300–500 words) must accompany the submission. The evaluation will be based on Conceptual Depth; Theoretical Adaptation; Creative Execution; and Communication, Presentation & Formalities.

Note on costs: Materials, services and equipment for this production can vary widely depending on what you would like to produce. It is up to you to define a budget that fits the necessary production quality and what you can afford. The professor is available to discuss your plans during office hours.

Brief Course Schedule

All dates in this schedule are tentative and subject to change. The detailed course schedule is at the end of the syllabus.

Overview		
Topic	Lecture	Tutorial
I - Fundamentals		
Week 1 - Introductions	Tue, 2 Sep: Lecture	Fri, 5 Sep: Dialogue
Week 2 - Culture, Technology and Society	Tue, 9 Sep: Seminar	Fri, 12 Sep: Remote Activity
Week 3 - Materiality and Power	Tue, 16 Sep: Lecture	Fri, 19 Sep: Writing Activity
Week 4 - An object lesson, The Walkman	Tue, 23 Sep: Seminar	Fri, 26 Sep: Methods Exercise
II – Critical Engagements		
Week 5 - Technological accounts - Determinism	Tue, 30 Sep: Lecture	Fri, 3 Oct: Writing Activity
Week 6 - Ideology and Digital Technology	Tue, 7 Oct: Lecture	Fri, 10 Oct: Writing Activity
Week 7 - Solutionism and Design Thinking	Tue, 14 Oct: Lecture	Fri, 17 Oct: Seminar
III - Interventions		
Week 8 - Glitch Feminism	Tue, 21 Oct: Seminar	Fri, 24 Oct: Planning Activity
Reading Week	27 to 31 October	
Week 9 - Life is not Useful	Tue, 4 Nov: Seminar	Fri, 7 Nov: Presentations
Week 10 - A Ch'ixi World is possible	Tue, 11 Nov: Seminar	Fri, 14 Nov: Production Activity
Week 11 - Luddism and Degrowth	Tue, 18 Nov: Lecture	Fri, 21 Nov: Draft Presentations
Week 12 - Dispatches	Tue, 25 Nov: Draft Presentation	Fri, 28 Nov: Course Review

Contact, Assumptions and Conduct

For contact about the course's structure and assessments, students can do so directly during office hours, by email or indirectly through a student representative. To book office hours, we will use an MS Bookings link on Quercus. You can direct other private inquiries by email to me or the TA, and we will try to respond within two business days.

All course updates and official information will be discussed *in class*. Quercus will be updated based on what happens in class. Emergency announcements from Quercus will also be sent to your email.

Basic assumptions

1. You will be in class. Presence, dialogue, and interaction are integral to knowledge production.
2. More than one thing can be true. It depends on the circumstances and details.
3. This is a graduate course. You can search and collect data, find peer-reviewed, appropriate further readings, and have a very good grasp of how academic texts work.
4. While using digital technology is part of our daily lives, this does not mean you know how to use every interface or media language.
5. You have the independence and initiative to seek guidance for your work within (Instructors and classmates) and outside of the course (Library resources, Student Advising, Writing Support, etc.). **This includes office hours.**
6. You may not be familiar with fundamental concepts from various disciplines. This is an interdisciplinary field and an interdisciplinary course. This is expected.
7. You can and should make mistakes. The classroom is the place to do it. The consequence for mistakes is more dialogue and collective learning.
8. You want to break with “common sense” and use your perspective to problematize situations and theories, thereby changing your own and others’ perspectives. This does not mean to be a “contrarian” or “devil’s advocate.”
9. You are willing to experiment with non-digital tools and technologies. Use notebooks, pens, pencils, collages, and other materials.
10. You have and are further developing critical thinking skills: you want to imagine and find out how things ought to be, not just how they currently are.
11. We are working together, not against each other.

Class Conduct

When interacting with others, you should always be attentive to their well-being, use polite and non-aggressive language, justify your positions, and give sources of information. When expressing opinions, always consider how your thoughts align with various realities and perspectives.

We value **solidarity as a learning practice**: think and take your positions from a solidary position. You can do this by acknowledging how your context both affects and is affected by others, and how everyone, including instructors and classmates, shares common goals and interests. Your actions should be focused on these common goals. Be open to help and be helped.

Charitable, Critical and Hate-Readings

The choice of topics and readings is based on what I judge to be the most effective to achieve our CLOs, regardless of their controversy or widely recognized or lesser-known problematic elements. Required readings are not merely supplementary content, but a significant part of the topic. **You must read them!**

Here's a good guide on academic reading by Paul Edwards:

<http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>

Your reading should always be **charitable**: assume (author and instructor) honesty, and seek their best (if flawed) argument, not its worst, to argue against.

In cases where there are controversies about authors, content, or their use of particular terms, we should always consider their context, limitations, and contributions while also questioning their effectiveness in achieving our goals. However, we should not ignore or dismiss the text without engaging with it constructively. This is a **critical** reading process. Even when assuming honesty, keep imagining alternatives to what they say.

You are allowed one “**hate-reading**” during the semester (in writing or discussion), in case you just can't stand the author or their arguments. But you should direct your rage wisely. Once you use it, it's gone.

Formatting, Citation and Reference Styles

Whenever you submit a text-based document, it must be formatted according to basic academic writing elements. You should use a serif font (such as Times New Roman), size 12pt, double-space and 2.54 cm (1 inch) margins in a letter-sized page.

The university offers MS Word for writing. There are open-source options, such as LibreOffice and LaTeX, or note-taking markdown apps like Obsidian and Bear, which can export PDFs with these basic formatting elements.

For citations and reference styles, I *strongly* recommend using the *Chicago-style author-date* format. You can find more information and writing references in the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#). This style does not suppress the full author's name, helping with identification. However, you can choose from widely used styles such as APA, MLA.

I recommend using Zotero to manage, track, and generate your sources, citations, and reference lists.

Late Submission Policy

Two types of activities generate assessment in this course: In-class and out-of-class.

In-class activities

These are the ones made in the presence of the instructors and classmates during official class time. They cannot be compensated, except when accommodations are granted by Accessibility Services *in advance*. ***If you missed it, it's gone.***

Out-of-class activities

These are writings, reports, recordings, productions and any other type of activities that generate a deliverable done out of official class time, not necessarily in the presence of the instructors, and to be submitted on Quercus or delivered in-person. These have hard deadlines, which will then be graded and returned with feedback from the deadline up to 3 weeks afterwards.

After the deadline, ***you can submit your assignment at any point in the semester until one week after the end of classes without penalty.*** However, **late submissions will only be graded and returned to you** when final grades are finalized and submitted to e-marks **at the end of the term (deadline for grade submissions)**. This means that if you do not submit assignments by the deadline, you might not have feedback before the last official day to drop the course.

I strongly advise you to follow the assignment due dates. They are set to reflect our grade submission deadlines and to provide a reasonable time for assessment and feedback. To ensure you receive feedback in a timely manner and your projects progress properly, please submit your assignments on time. If you miss the deadline by a few hours or one full day, you *may* still receive feedback as if you submitted on time, *but this is not guaranteed.* This is dependent on whether we have initiated marking or not.

Within the instructor's purview, no additional extensions or penalties will be accepted *for any reason.*

I encourage you to read about *Accessibility Services*, following the link in the Faculty Policies section below, to explore other accommodations for your assignments if needed.

Generative AI Policy

I ***strongly*** advise against using Generative AI in general. The use of such tools for *in-class assignments is prohibited.* Students *may choose* to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the *out-of-class assignments* in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work.

Course instructors reserve the right to ask students to explain their process for creating their assignment.

If you have not used GenAI in your assignment, you must add the statement as the last line of the document, after references:

“Generative AI Statement: I (we) did not use any Generative AI tool (such as MS Copilot, ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini) in the planning, creation or finalization of this assignment.”

Detailed Course Schedule

All dates are tentative and may change.

Each week has specific learning goals that correspond to our CLOs. Additionally, all topics include the following learning goals:

- Identify and rephrase each author's central claim or thesis.
- Summarize their arguments.
- Provide accurate definitions of the key terms the authors use.

Week 1 – Introductions

Learning Goals:

Explain the rationale of the course, its routines, what the expectations are and how to meet them (from the instructors' and students' perspectives). Explain the technique of "writing the implosion" and describe the methods used by the authors to study technology. Reflect on how methodologies relate to theories.

Required Texts

Dumit, Joseph. 2014. "Writing the Implosion: Teaching the World One Thing at a Time." *Cultural Anthropology* 29 (2): 344–62. <https://doi.org/10.14506/ca29.2.09>.

Crawford, Kate, and Vladan Joler. 2019. "Anatomy of an AI System." *Virtual Creativity* 9 (1): 117–20. https://doi.org/10.1386/vcr_00008_7.

Tue, 2 Sep

Course Structure

Short Lecture and Reading: Exploring Technologies

In-class Writing: Core Concepts of C&T

Fri, 5 Sep

Course Question Time

In Class-Dialogue: Dumit and Crawford, Joler

Week 2 - Culture, Technology and Society

Learning Goals:

Outline a history of Culture & Technology Studies. Explain the concept of Culture.

Required Texts

McNeil, Maureen. 2008. "Feminist Cultural Studies of Science and Technology: Roots and Routes." In *Feminist Cultural Studies of Science and Technology*, 11–24. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203938324>.

Williams, Raymond. 2014. "Culture Is Ordinary." In *Raymond Williams on Culture & Society: Essential Writings*, edited by Jim McGuigan. 1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road, London EC1Y 1SP United Kingdom: SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473914766>.

Suggested Texts

Kirby, Vicki. 2011. "Natural Convers(at)ions: Or, What If Culture Was Really Nature All Along?" In *Quantum Anthropologies*, 68–88. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822394440-004>.

Uotinen, Johanna. 2010. "Digital Television and the Machine That Goes 'PING!': Autoethnography as a Method for Cultural Studies of Technology." *Journal for Cultural Research* 14 (2): 161–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14797580903481306>.

Tue, 9 Sep – In-Person

The Professor will be away but **Lauren Knight** will be our guest speaker, conducting this class. Readings may change!

What is a Cultural Study of Technology?

Fri, 12 Sep - Remote

Audio Diary – "Culture Is Ordinary"

Students will record a short audio diary (3–5 minutes) reflecting on an "ordinary" moment in their lives that reveals something about culture and technology. More info on Quercus.

Short Writing: What would you like to explore?

Make a list of 8 objects you would like to study and why (in light of the week's dialogue)

Week 3 - Materiality and Power

Learning Goals:

Explain the relationship between the symbolic and the material, question the studies that think of them separately, and describe the challenges of combining them. Explain the concept of Technology and reexamine your assumptions about Culture & Technology.

Required Texts

Sterne, Jonathan. 2014. “‘What Do We Want?’ ‘Materiality!’ ‘When Do We Want It?’ ‘Now!’” In *Media Technologies: Essays on Communication, Materiality, and Society*, edited by Tarleton Gillespie, Pablo J. Boczkowski, and Kirsten A. Foot, 0. The MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/9780262525374.003.0006>.

Ellmann, Maud. 2024. “Introduction”. In: *The Vacuum Cleaner: A Cultural Investigation*. Material Modernisms. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-56666-0>.

Suggested Texts

Wajcman, Judy. 2010. “Feminist Theories of Technology.” *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34 (1): 143–52. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/ben057>.

Cockburn, Cynthia. 1981. “The Material of Male Power.” *Feminist Review* 9 (1): 41–58. <https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.1981.19>.

Winner, Langdon. 1980. “Do Artifacts Have Politics?” *Daedalus* 109 (1): 121–36. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20024652>.

Tue, 16 Sep

Listening to your Audio Diaries

Lecture: Materiality, Power and the Symbolic

In-Class Group Assignment

Fri, 19 Sep

In-Class Writing: What would you like to explore?

Make a shortlist of 3 objects you would like to study and explain why these are a priority, based on what you have learned so far.

Week 4 - An object lesson, The Walkman

Learning Goals

Explain the theory and methodology of Cultural Studies using the Circuit of Culture. Propose a way to address its supposed lack of attention to materiality. Practice the Cultural Study of a technological object. Compare and combine it with the Implosion Writing method.

Group Required Texts

Everyone will read the Introduction and Chapter 1. Chapters 2-6 will be assigned to groups.

Du Gay, Paul, Linda Janes, Hugh McKay, Keith Negus, and Stuart Hall. 2013. *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*. Second edition. Culture, Media and Identities. London: SAGE.

Tue, 23 Sep

Seminar: Let's talk about the cultural circuit of the Walkman

Each group will discuss the main idea of their chapter among themselves and present it to the class.

Fri, 26 Sep

Dumit returns: Mapping out dimensions

Framing the Circuit: Where do these elements fit in the circuit of culture?

In-Class Writing: What would you like to explore?

Reflect on the reasons for the three-object short list and classify them in order of preference, justifying their position based on the previous exercise. At home, choose your object and bring it to the next class.

Week 5 - Technological accounts - Determinism

Learning Goals

Describe the difference between technological determinism and social constructivism of technology. Explain how theories and accounts of technological development and technology relate to visions for the future of society. Collect exploratory information about an artifact.

Required Texts

Wyatt, Sally. 2023. "Technological Determinism: What It Is and Why It Matters." In *Technology Ethics: A Philosophical Introduction and Readings*, edited by Gregory J. Robson and Jonathan Y. Tsou, 1st ed. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003189466>.

Pinto García, Lina. 2019. "Disentangling War and Disease in Post-Conflict Colombia beyond Technoscientific Peacemaking." *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* 2 (1): 94–111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25729861.2018.1532779>.

Suggested Texts

Dafoe, Allan. 2015. "On Technological Determinism: A Typology, Scope Conditions, and a Mechanism." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 40 (6): 1047–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243915579283>.

Duncan, Jane. 2025. "Mass Digital Surveillance and National Security Technotopias." In *Digital Capitalism and Its Limits: Technotopia, Power and Risk*, edited by Vishwas Satgar, 35–52. Wits University Press. <https://doi.org/10.18772/22025049407>.

Alcoff, Linda Martín. 2022. "Extractivist Epistemologies." *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* 5 (1): 2127231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25729861.2022.2127231>.

O'Shea, Lizzie. 2021. "Technological Utopianism Is Dangerous: The Tech Billionaires Have Nothing on the Paris Commune." In *Future Histories: What Ada Lovelace, Tom Paine, and the Paris Commune Can Teach Us about Digital Technology*. Verso Books.

Tue, 30 Sep

How to identify determinism?

Fri, 3 Oct

Your Object Choice

You will bring the object you chose to study to class.

Week 6 - Ideology and Digital Technology

Learning Goals

Describe methods for the critique of Ideology in Technology. Explain the concept of ideology as it relates to material conditions and power. Describe a recent history of digital technology. Plan an intervention in a C&T debate or practice.

Required Texts

Barbrook, Richard, and Andy Cameron. 1996. "The Californian Ideology." *Science as Culture* 6 (1): 44–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09505439609526455>.

Gebru, Timnit, and Émile P. Torres. 2024. "The TESCREAL Bundle: Eugenics and the Promise of Utopia through Artificial General Intelligence." *First Monday*, April. <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v29i4.13636>.

Suggested Texts

Küppers, Anne. 2024. "Anything but Representative Democracy: Explaining Conspiracy Believers' Support for Direct Democracy and Technocracy." *Politics and Governance* 12 (0). <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.8582>.

Tang, Shawna. 2025. "Chinese Racialization and Technologies of Mothering: Continuities in Straight and Queer Reproduction in Singapore." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 50 (3): 635–53. <https://doi.org/10.1086/733644>.

McElroy, Erin. 2018. "Postsocialism and the Tech Boom 2.0: Techno-Utopics of Racial/Spatial Dispossession." *Social Identities* 24 (2): 206–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2017.1321718>.

Tue, 7 Oct

How can you gather information on the relationship between Material Conditions and Worldview?

Fri, 10 Oct

The state of your research. Choosing a Question, Designing your Methods

Week 7 - Solutionism and Design Thinking

Learning Goals

Explain the ideology of Technological Solutionism. Describe how the fields of engineering and design inadvertently incorporate solutionism in professional practices. Identify how solutionism can affect other fields. Practice the critique of Solutionist Ideology and propose strategies to avoid solutionism. Analyze the design, construction, and use of an artifact.

Required Texts

Richterich, Annika. 2024. "Can't Fix This? Innovation, Social Change, and Solutionism in Design Thinking." *Media and Communication* 12 (0). <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.7427>.

Adamu, Muhammad Sadi. 2023. "No More 'Solutionism' or 'Saviourism' in Futuring African HCI: A Manifesto." *ACM Trans. Comput.-Hum. Interact.* 30 (2): 21:1-21:42. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3571811>.

Suggested Texts

Nachtwey, Oliver, and Timo Seidl. 2023. "The Solutionist Ethic and the Spirit of Digital Capitalism." *Theory, Culture & Society*, October, 02632764231196829. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02632764231196829>.

Cunningham, Jay, Gabrielle Benabdallah, Daniela Rosner, and Alex Taylor. 2023. "On the Grounds of Solutionism: Ontologies of Blackness and HCI." *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction* 30 (2): 20:1-20:17. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3557890>.

Tue, 14 Oct

How can you trace an object back to its developer's ideology?

Fri, 17 Oct

Telling stories of your object: a report on Determinism, Ideology and Solutionism and relating your object to larger debates

Week 8 - Glitch Feminism

Learning Goals

Explain a feminist approach to creative C&T practice as proposed by the author. Outline the characteristics of creative projects dealing with C&T; Identify counter-hegemonic, anti-solutionist C&T processes and strategies in creative projects; Outline strategies for knowledge representation.

Required Texts

Everyone reads this. Start with the Introduction and hop around. Read as much as you can.

Russell, Legacy. 2020. *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto*. Verso.

Tue, 21 Oct

Short Seminars

The class will be divided into groups to discuss and present different texts.

Group Required Texts

Innovation and Development

Valle, Firuzeh Shokooh. 2023. "Introduction: Feminist Technopolitics and Development." In *In Defense of Solidarity and Pleasure: Feminist Technopolitics from the Global South*, 1–30. Stanford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503636156>.

Arts, Imagination, Futures

Abramovic, Boris, Grisha Coleman, Marco Donnarumma, Elizabeth Jochum, and Christina Schoux Casey. 2021. "Decolonizing the Machine: Race, Gender and Disability in Robots and Algorithmic Art." In: Michelle Christensen and Florian Conradi. *Proceedings of Politics of the Machines - Rogue Research 2021 (POM 2021)*, 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.14236/ewic/POM2021.1>.

Engineering, Infrastructures, Science, Knowledge

Andrisani, Vincent. 2019. "¡Se Bota El Tanque!: Housing, Infrastructure, and the Sounds of Water in Havana's Domestic Spaces." *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* 2 (1): 442–57.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/25729861.2019.1639468>.

Design

Haimson, Oliver L. 2025. "Involving Trans People and Communities in Trans Technology Design Processes." In *Trans Technologies*, 107–40. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

Fri, 24 Oct

Open Day of Planning: your Object's Story

This is your free time to plan and execute your project. You will be able to schedule one-on-one chats with the Professor or the TA during this time or attend office hours. The Professor will be in class.

Week 9 - Life is not Useful

Learning Goals

Reflect on the diversity of indigenous or non-Western perspectives on the relationship between culture and technology. Outline the oppositions to current hegemonic technological systems and propositions from the Krenak perspective. Create alternative strategies to critically engage with technological development.

Required Texts

Everyone reads this. The book is short, you're welcome to read it in full.

Krenak, Ailton. 2023a. "Life Is Not Useful." and "The Thing-Making Machine." In *Life Is Not Useful*, 49–61; 25–38. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tue, 4 Nov

Short Seminars

The class will be divided into groups to discuss and present different texts.

Group Required Texts

Innovation, Development

Campos Navarrete, Marisol, and Asaf Zohar. 2021. "Rethinking Sustainable Development by Following Indigenous Approaches to Community Wellbeing." *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* 4 (1): 1946315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25729861.2021.1946315>.

Arts, Imagination, Futures

Das, Arindam, and Subhasis Ray. 2024. "Techno-Humane Futures in the Global South: Lessons from Professor Shonku." *Technovation* 132 (April):102987. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2024.102987>.

Engineering, Infrastructures, Science, Knowledge

Cruz, Cristiano Cordeiro. 2021. "Brazilian Grassroots Engineering: A Decolonial Approach to Engineering Education." *European Journal of Engineering Education* 46 (5): 690–706. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2021.1878346>.

Design

Stock, Ryan. 2023. "Abolition Solarities: Theorizing Antiracist and Anticapitalist Solar Energy Insurrections." *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Transition* 4 (August):100063. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rset.2023.100063>.

Fri, 7 Nov

The State of Your Research: Object Research Journal

You will present your journal to the class (in small groups). Details on Quercus.

Week 10 - A Ch'ixi World is possible

Learning Goals

Reflect on the diversity of indigenous or non-Western perspectives regarding the relationship between culture and technology. Identify similarities among Latin American indigenous theories of contemporary society. Explain and reflect on the notion of pluriversality and the author's critique of development. Create alternative strategies to critically engage with technological development.

Required Texts

Cusicanqui, Silvia Rivera. 2023. "Magic Words: Reflections on the Nature of the Present Crisis." In *A Ch'ixi World Is Possible: Essays from a Present in Crisis*, 65–87. Lines. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Tue, 11 Nov

Short Seminars

The class will be divided into groups to discuss and present different texts.

Group Required Texts

Innovation and Development

Jimenez, Andrea, Delgado Deborah, Merino Roger, and Alejandro Argumedo. 2022. "A Decolonial Approach to Innovation? Building Paths Towards Buen Vivir." *The Journal of Development Studies* 58 (9): 1633–50.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2022.2043281>.

Arts, Imagination, Futures

Pitman, Thea. 2019. "Indigenous New Media Arts: Narrative Threads and Future Imaginaries." *Transmotion* 5 (1): 184–206.

Engineering, Infrastructures, Science, Knowledge

Cruz, Cristiano Cordeiro, Alexei Ochoa-Duarte, and Andrés Leonardo León. 2023. "The Amerindian Buen Vivir as a Paradigm for Another Possible Engineering Practice and Education." In *Rethinking Technology and Engineering: Dialogues Across Disciplines and Geographies*, edited by Albrecht Fritzsche and Andrés Santa-María, 309–23. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25233-4_23.

Design

Koch, Gertraud, Bella, Gábor, Helm, Paula, and Fausto and Giunchiglia. 2024. "Layers of Technology in Pluriversal Design Decolonising Language Technology with the Live Language Initiative." *CoDesign* 20 (1): 77–90.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2024.2341799>.

Fri, 14 Nov

Open Day of Production and Feedback

This is your free time to produce or refine your production. You will be able to schedule one-on-one chats with the Professor or the TA during this time or attend office hours. The Professor will be in class.

Week 11 - Luddism and Degrowth

Learning Goals

Explain the Luddite position and how it relates to politics (power relations). Examine the C&T articulation to judge the possibility of opposition to technological development. Relate Art Practices, Political Action, and Technological Accounts. Organize data, artifacts, art, and information for research-creation.

Required Texts

Carter, Jonathan S., and Misti Yang. 2023. "Sophie vs. the Machine: Neo-Luddism as Response to Technical-Colonial Corruption of the General Intellect." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 53 (3): 366–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2023.2200699>.

Kwet, Michael. 2025. "Digital Degrowth as Decolonization." In *Digital Capitalism and Its Limits: Technotopia, Power and Risk*, edited by Vishwas Satgar, 161–76. Wits University Press. <https://doi.org/10.18772/22025049407>.

Suggested Texts

Ayferam Endaylalu, Gashaw, and Yacob and Arsano. 2024. "Water in Contested Worldviews: Insights from Hydropower Projects on Abbay and Omo-Gibe Rivers." *Cogent Social Sciences* 10 (1): 2391534. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2391534>.

Charitsis, Vassilis, Laamanen Mikko, and Tuukka Lehtiniemi. 2025. "Towards Algorithmic Luddism: Class Politics in Data Capitalism." *Information, Communication & Society* 28 (6): 971–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2024.2435996>.

Clancy, Brett. 2017. "Rebel or Rioter? Luddites Then and Now." *Society* 54 (5): 392–98. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-017-0161-6>.

King, David. 2019. "Technocracy, Luddism, and the Environmental Crisis: The Green Movement Needs to Think about Social Power Just as Much as about Technology." *Earth Island Journal*, 2019. Gale In Context: Canada. https://link-gale-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/apps/doc/A600036363/CIC?u=utoronto_main&sid=bookmark-CIC&xid=62ddde6f.

Tue, 18 Nov

What motivates resistance to Technological Development? How can this resistance be successful?

Fri, 21 Nov

Open Day of Finalization and Peer-Discussion: Bring your Final Draft

This is your free time to finalize and discuss your final draft. You will be able to schedule one-on-one chats with the Professor or the TA during this time or attend office hours. The Professor will be in class.

Week 12 - Dispatches

Learning Goals

Summarize the main methods of culture & technology studies. Reflect on the philosophy of knowledge, technology and science. Evaluate the C&T relationship as it applies to the student's learning trajectory and possible paths of professional and creative practices.

Tue, 25 Nov

Final Reports and Peer-Feedback

Fri, 28 Nov

Course Overview and Dialogue

Faculty policies, resources and more

Students must be familiar with all information related to grading policies, health and wellness, accessibility services and accommodations, academic integrity, student absence and declaring an absence in ACORN, and academic dates and deadlines. This information is common to all graduate courses syllabi and can be found here (<https://ischool.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Faculty-of-Information-Required-Common-Syllabus-Elements-Grad-2025-2026.pdf>).

Note

This syllabus was developed based on previous iterations of this course at the iSchool. Particularly, the ones taught by Matthew Wells (Fall 2023), Claire Battershill (Fall 2022), Patrick Keilty (Fall 2021) and Alan Galey (Fall 2018).

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