HU5112: Critical Perspectives on Science and Technology
Ciro A. Sandoval
Fall 2004/ Walker 139
Thurs 7-9:30 p.m.

Course Description:
As the title of this course makes clear, we will treat critical perspectives on science and technology from philosophical, historical, social, political, and cultural viewpoints. This means that we will consider science and technology as socially constructed systems that mutually inform and interact. Hence the importance of historical and philosophical views as to how these systems have evolved and shaped human beings, both as agents and subjects.

Objectives:
Close reading of the texts assigned, seeking to illuminate understanding of the place of technology and science in effecting social institutions, with the hope that some of the topics discussed will motivate your personal response in the form of an original final paper.

Reading Assignments: We will read critical and historical texts as follows:

- Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*
- Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance*
- Michele Serres (with Bruno Latour), *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time*

We will read these books in the above order, with additional excerpts relating to Marxist philosophy in order to provide extra foundation for these critical perspectives.

From *German Ideology*, we will read: “Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy.” From the *Marx and Engels Reader*, we will read “The Grundrisse,” and from Marx’s *Capital, Part I*, “Commodities and Money.” I will place photocopies of these excerpts in my mailbox for you to copy and/or read and return.

All of the above readings will be assigned to individual students for reading, commentary, and presentation in class.

Written and Oral Requirements:
Each of you will be required to write a 1-2 page PROTOCOL on a critical issue stemming from the reading of each book. These PROTOCOLS are to be shared with me and other students in class.
You are also expected to present/comment on your final paper during the last week of class.

**Syllabus:**

We will have 12 weeks in which to complete five books. Hence the following schedule:

- **Week 2, 3, and 4:** Lewis Mumford
- **Week 5, 6, and 7:** Michael Adas
- **Week 8:** Michele Serres (with Bruno Latour)
- **Week 9 and 10:** Alf Hornborg (plus Marx handouts)
- **Week 11, 12, and 13:** Bernard Stiegler (plus Marx handouts)
- **Week 14:** Presentations in class on final paper

**Final Paper (10-15 pages, not including bibliography)**

*Due:* Monday, Week 15

**Evaluation:**

- Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions 30%
- PROTOCOLS (typed) and copied: 30%
- FINAL PAPER 40%