MEDIA SPACE | PUBLIC SPACE
Special Topics Seminar
Media Studies Program: The New School
Spring, 2006

Shannon Mattern, Ph.D.   Mondays, 3:00 – 4:50
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Office Hours: M 1:30-3, 5-7:30, W 4-6

This course serves as a convergence point for the myriad courses and programs that comprise the "Media Space | Public Space" (MS|PS) project, a year-long investigation of the relationships between public spaces, media technologies, their uses, and the mediated environments they create. Bringing together students from the Departments of Media Studies & Film, Design & Technology, Architecture, and International Affairs, this seminar takes the University and the city-at-large as extended classrooms, as laboratories, in which we can investigate how new media are shaping the ways we design and experience public space, and how the growing academic interest in "space" and "place" can contribute to theoretical and practical concerns germane to media studies and other fields concerned with media.

Students enrolled in the seminar will be asked to attend, over the course of the semester, a minimum of **three** events that will be listed on the MS|PS events calendar. Those events will include relevant presentations in other Media Studies, Architecture, Design & Technology or International Affairs classes; events organized specifically for MP|PS (such as screenings, guest speakers, field trips); relevant events in other Departments and Divisions across the University; and programs and exhibits offered by the many cultural and activist organizations in the city that are concerned with issues central to MS|PS. **"Sanctioned" events will be listed on the MSPS calendar @ http://mediastudies.newschool.edu/projectmsps/calendar.htm**. You're encouraged to attend these events in groups so that you have an opportunity to discuss your experience with classmates – and perhaps jointly construct your responses (described below).

We will gather in the classroom for several seminar sessions during the semester to discuss the course's foundation readings and our individual explorations of the seminar-related, outside-of-class events. In our in-class sessions, we will identify overarching themes, develop synthetic theories, draw conclusions about the relationships between media and space – and, ultimately, design and facilitate a culminating project that reflects our individual and collective understandings of those relationships.

Attendance at and **Participation** in classroom sessions. Regular attendance and participation are expected, and thus will affect your grade, negatively, only if your attendance and participation are irregular or insufficient.

Online Journal Posts: We'll be keeping a class journal -- **http://www.wordsinspace.net/msps/** -- where we'll post our responses to the outside-of-class events and chronicle our evolving understandings of "the public," "mediaspace," "public space," and the four organizing themes of the class. Please use these posts to *make connections*: to link your experiences at the outside events to the course readings, our class discussions, and your *own* projects; to compare/contrast the texts we address at various points throughout the semester; to establish ties to *other* posts, etc. This forum is the next-best thing to meeting in the classroom to discuss our outside experiences; but because online conversations rarely match up to in-the-flesh dialogues, I encourage you to **find others with whom you can attend and discuss your events and construct joint or group posts.**

> **Three 500-Word Event Posts**: 3@10%. These **must be posted within one week of each of the three "event weeks"**; that is, your response to your outside-of class event for the February 6-13 event week, for example, must be posted by noon on February 20; the post for the February 20-27 week must be posted by March 6; and, for the April 17-24 week, by May 1. Regard these event responses as reviews; think of yourself as providing an important *reporting and critiquing* function for classmates who may

not have had the opportunity to attend the event you selected. Provide a brief description, and tell us how your event contributes to our understanding of issues germane to the class. Not all of the events will do the critical work for you; sometimes you'll have to "fill in the gaps" – to find the "media" or the "public space" in the project, or, if these elements aren't overt, to extrapolate from the project to the class. **If someone has already reviewed your event**, please structure your post as a substantial, thoughtful *response*. In short, we're aiming to make this a *dialogue*, rather than a long list of disconnected posts.

15 Additional Posts: 30%. You can use the remaining posts however you wish – to respond to our guest speakers or field trips, to provide a response to a classmate's post, to ask a substantive (i.e., not procedural) question, to draw our attention to (and discuss) web projects or artists' work or architectural designs that deal with topics relevant to the course, to revise our "definitions" of "the public," "mediaspace," or "public space," etc. You're free to propose new topics and create new threads.

Now, as much as I hate to have to do this, I have to impose a schedule. If I didn't, I imagine that quite a few of you would be scrambling together 15 posts in the last week of class ;-) So, in order to ensure that we *sustain a dialogue* throughout the semester, I'm asking you to **post at least once a week** – even if it's only a quick question or reference to an outside resource. You can miss up to two weeks – but if you do, I ask that you eventually catch up and achieve your 15-post requirement by the end of the semester.

Project Proposal: 10%. Submit via email (to matterns@newschool.edu) a one-paragraph description of your final project, along with any relevant graphic explanations, by **noon on Monday, 4/3**. We may discuss these proposals in small groups during the following week's class.

Culminating Project: 30%. Throughout the semester, as we encounter and engage with myriad approaches to, applications of, and experimentations with "media" and "space," we'll think about how we can make our own contribution to this new and expanding interdisciplinary field of inquiry. The culminating project is an "emergent" project – which means that its form and content will not be apparent to us as we begin our study, but will begin to take shape and attain focus as we continue to read, talk, and experience. You – either as an individual or as part of a group – may choose to pursue a particular "media space"-relevant topic or question through a scholarly research paper, or to chronicle and draw some conclusions about our semester's experiences through **a textual, photographic, or, video production**. All production and creative projects must be accompanied by a 500-750-word paper explaining the theoretical or critical underpinnings of your project.

STUDENT COMMUNICATION POLICY

I am always willing to speak with students about their work in the class and other academic matters. You're welcome to visit me or make a "phone appointment" during my office hours, call me at my office number (be aware that I check my messages only during my office hours), or email me. But please use email judiciously! I say this because the volume of student email I've been receiving has gotten a little bit out of hand.

Consider the following:

• Before you write me with a question, problem, or concern, make sure that you've exhausted all other means of figuring out the problem or dealing with the concern on your own. Ask a classmate, check the syllabus, or do a quick web search or some library research.
• Consider whether the issue might be best addressed during an office hour chat or phone conversation. For example, if you're asking a multi-part question, or wanting to talk about something deep or complicated – like astrophysics, tax codes, or your professional goals – it's probably best that we sit down and have a talk.
• Please don't write me with last-minute questions or urgent requests and expect an immediate response; keep in mind that *your* procrastination (although I'm aware that we're all guilty of it) does not constitute *my* crisis.

Required Texts:
- Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., <u>MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age</u> (Routledge, 2004).
- David Morley, <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u> (Routledge, 2000).
- Howard Rheingold, <u>Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution</u> (Perseus, 2002).
- Krzysztof Wodiczko, <u>Critical Vehicles: Writings, Projects, Interviews</u> (MIT, 1999).

Monday, January 23

Introduction:
Exploring the Connections and Tensions Between Media and Public Space
A History of Theories Linking Media and Space, Theories of the Public and Public Space

- Mimi Sheller & John Urry, "Mobile Transformations of 'Public' and 'Private' Life," <u>Theory, Culture and Society</u> 20:3 (2003): 107-125.

Monday, January 30

Discuss "affinity groups" and group event attendance

Public Spheres: Spaces of Mediated Commerce and Control

<u>Agenda</u>: Using theories of the "public sphere" and other political economic conceptions of space to help us begin thinking about potential overarching themes. Developing potential through-lines that synthesize our thinking and production on the topic of media space][public space.

Probes: how people and practices are defining "publics" and "public spheres"… what makes a place "public"… what makes media "public" … roles that commerce and systems of control play in public places … media as contributing to or compromising "public-ness" … media as constructing and maintaining, subverting or redirecting forces of commerce and control and "public spheres" …

- Nick Couldry and Anna McCarthy, "Introduction: Orientations: Mapping MediaSpace," In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., <u>MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age</u> (Routledge, 2004): 1-18.
- David Morley, "Introduction," Chapters 1 and 2 In <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u> (Routledge, 2000).
- Jean Baudrillard & Marie Maclean, "The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media" <u>New Literary History</u> 16:3 (Spring 1985): 577-89.
- Clive Barnett, "Neither Poison Nor Cure: Space, Scale and Public Life in Media Theory" In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., <u>MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age</u> (Routledge, 2004): 58-74.

Monday, February 6

NO CLASS: Choose an <u>event</u> from the MSPS Calendar to attend on your own, or with a group of classmates this week – and post a response.

Monday, February 6:30pm: Antenna Design: "Intervention / Interaction"
Wollman Hall (65 West 11th Street, 5th Floor) See www.antennadesign.com/.

Public Spheres: Spaces of Mediated Commerce and Control

- Tricia Rose, "Fear of a Black Planet: Rap Music and Black Cultural Politics in the 1990s" <u>The Journal of Negro Education</u> 60:3 (Summer 1991): 276-90.
- Susan Bickford, "Constructing Inequality: City Spaces and the Architecture of Citizenship" <u>Political Theory</u> 28:3 (Jun 2000): 355-376.
- Arlene Davila, "The Marketable Neighborhood: Commercial Latinidad in New York's East Harlem" In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., <u>MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age</u> (Routledge, 2004): 95-113.
- Krzysztof Wodiczko, <u>Critical Vehicles: Writings, Projects, Interviews</u> (MIT, 1999).

Monday, February 13

Public Spheres: Spaces of Mediated Commerce and Control

- David Morley, Chapters 3 & 4 In <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u> (Routledge, 2000).
- W.J.T. Mitchell, "An Interview with Barbara Kruger," <u>Critical Inquiry,</u> 17:2 (Winter 1991): 434-448.
- Shaun Morres, "The Doubling of Place: Electronic Media, Time-Space Arrangements and Social Relationships" In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., <u>MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age</u> (Routledge, 2004): 21-36.
- Michael Bull: "To Each Their Own Bubble: Mobile Spaces of Sound in the City,: In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., <u>MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age</u> (Routledge, 2004): 275-293.
- Media Art Net's "Public Spheres: Steve Dietz, Editorial; Josephine Bosma, "Constructing Media Spaces"; and Steve Dietz, "Public Sphere_s": http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/public_sphere_s/

Monday, February 20: No Class: Presidents' Day

Choose an <u>event</u> from the MSPS Calendar to attend on your own, or with a group of classmates this week – and post a response.

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

<u>Probes:</u> symbolic and physical geographies of public spaces … how places "mean" … how they contribute to their inhabitants' practices of identity construction …how the presence or use of media in public spaces support or hinder various publics' practices of self-definition and meaning-making

- David Morley, Chapters 5 & 6 In <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u> (Routledge, 2000).
- Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift, "Introduction" In Crang and Thrift, Eds., <u>Thinking Space</u> (Routledge, 2000): 1-30.
- Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin and Gill Valentine, "Thinking Space and Place," "Intellectual and Disciplinary Genealogies" In <u>Key Thinkers on Space and Place</u> (Sage, 2004): 3-15.
- Jane Jacobs, "The Uses of Sidewalks: Contact" In <u>The Death and Life of Great American Cities</u> (Vintage 1992): 55-73.

Monday, February 27

GUEST SPEAKER: Damon Rich of the Center for Urban Pedagogy: Please visit anothercupdevelopment.org to learn more about CUP's work in public spaces – and particularly their use of *media* in teaching about urban issues.

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

- Paolo Prato, "Music in the Streets: The Example of Washington Square Park in New York City" Popular Music 4 (1984): 151-163.
- Gillian Rose, "The Cultural Politics of Place: Local Representations and Oppositional Discourse in Two Films" Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 19:1 (1994): 46-60.
- Tong Soon Lee, "Technology and the Production of Islamic Space: The Call to Prayer in Singapore" Ethnomusicology 43:1 (1999): 86-100.

Monday, March 6

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

- Steven W. Lewis, "The Media of New Public Spaces in Global Cities: Subway Advertising in Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Taipei" Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies 17:3 (2003): 261-272.
- Takashi Fujitani, "Electronic Pageantry and Japan's 'Symbolic Emperor'" The Journal of Asian Studies 51:4 (Nov 1992): 824-40.

Monday, March 13

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

- Christopher Reed, "Imminent Domain: Queer Space in the Built Environment" Art Journal 55:4 (Winter 1996): 64-70.
- Julie Peteet "The Writing on the Walls: The Graffiti of the Intifada" Cultural Anthropology 11:2 (May 1996): 139-159.
- Fiona Allon, "An Ontology of Everyday Control: Space, Media Flows and 'Smart' Living in the Absolute Present," In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age (Routledge, 2004): 253-273.

Monday, March 20: No Class: Spring Break

Monday, March 27

Spaces of Flows: How Media Modulate and Capture the flows of Bits and Bodies through Time and Space

Agenda: Thinking conceptually and materially – that is, in terms of specific production or creative projects --- about the culminating event.

Probes: what it means for spaces to be dynamic, mobile, delocalized …how the body experiences and navigates these spaces … how media shape and occupy them ,,,where media and bodies meet

one another in these spaces … what happens to power and meaning and identity in such dynamic physical and mediated environments …

- David Morley, Chapters 7 & 8 In <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u> (Routledge, 2000).
- Mary Zournazi: "Navigating Movements: An Interview with Brian Massumi": http://www.21cmagazine.com/issue2/massumi.html
- Paul Adams, "Cyberspace and Virtual Places" <u>Geographical Review</u> 87: 2 (April 1997): 155-171.

Monday, April 3

Final Project Proposal due; submit via email by noon

FIELD TRIP: Kathleen Hulser, Public Historian, New York Historical Society: Meet in Lower Manhattan to experience a beta-version of the N-YHS's new cell phone and podcast-enhanced walking tour of women's historical sites.

Spaces of Flows: How Media Modulate and Capture the flows of Bits and Bodies through Time and Space

- David Morley, Ch. 9, 10, and 11 in <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u> (Routledge, 2000): 149-245.

Monday, April 10

Détournement and Deconstruction: Using Media to Dismantle and Reassemble Spaces and Publics

<u>Agenda</u>: Defining the terms of the dialogue/exchange that will take place through the culminating event. Concretizing plans for the culminating event

<u>Probes</u>**:** how space is malleable … practices a public has at
its disposal to reshape space … how/when spatial reshaping becomes a political project …how media become instrumental in such endeavors

- Howard Rheingold, <u>Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution</u> (Perseus, 2002).
- Kyratso G. Karahalios, "Social Catalysts: Enhancing Communication in Mediated Spaces" Dissertation, Ph.D. In Media Arts and Sciences, MIT, June 24, 2004: http://smg.media.mit.edu/papers/kkarahal/thesis/kk-dissertation.pdf
- America Speaks: http://www.americaspeaks.org/.

Monday, April 17

NO CLASS: Choose an <u>event</u> from the MSPS Calendar to attend on your own, or with a group of classmates this week – and post a response.

Détournement and Deconstruction: Using Media to Dismantle and Reassemble Spaces and Publics

- Shannon O'Lear, "Networks of Engagement: Electronic Communication and Grassroots Environmental Activism in Kaliningrad" <u>Human Geography</u> 81: 3 (1999): 165-178
- Jill Lane, "Digital Zapatistas," <u>The Drama Review</u> 47:2 (Summer 2003): 129-144.
- Thomas McDonough, "Situationist Space" <u>October</u> 67 (Winter 1994): 58-77.
- Jim Costanzo, "REPOhistory's Circulation: The Migration of Public Art to the Internet" <u>Art Journal</u> 59:4 (Winter 2000): 32-7.

Monday, April 24
      In-class Workshop to prepare for final project presentations and exhibition.

Monday, May 1
      Present final projects. Prepare for exhibition opening.

Monday, May 8
      Closing comments.