MEDIA SPACE | PUBLIC SPACE
Special Topics Seminar
Media Studies Program: The New School
Fall, 2005

Instructors:
Elizabeth Ellsworth, Ph.D. Shannon Mattern, Ph.D.
ellswore@newschool.edu matterns@newschool.edu
Office Hrs: M: 6-7 p.m. Office Hours: M: 2-4pm
T: 10-1 p.m.; W 11-1 p.m. W: 2-6pm

Room 1204
TUESDAYS 4-5:50 p.m.

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 ten 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.

Students will sign up to attend specific events and to meet classmates at agreed upon times/places. Students will experience the events as a member of a small group from the class, and will schedule time after the event to discuss/debrief/concept-build with their small groups. The seminar facilitators will attend many of these events along with the students.

We will gather in the classroom for eight 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 of and Participation in classroom sessions and event sessions: 20%

Response Papers: 10 @ 5% each = 50%. Please post to the “Discussion” section on the class’s portal site a 300-word response paper for each of the ten events you attend throughout the
semester. In these papers, we ask you to link your experiences at these events to the texts you’re reading for class, and address how the events and the readings are contributing to your evolving understanding of the relationships between media and space. After posting your comments, be sure to return to the discussion to review the instructors’ and your classmates’ responses to your post, and to offer your own responses to others’ posts. We ask that you post twice a week, at minimum.

Culminating Project/Event: 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. We – either as a group of individuals or as one collective – 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. We might opt to make a creative intervention into an urban space by designing, and exhibiting or staging, a public media art exhibit or performance. Regardless of what we decide to do, we’ll translate our understandings and insights gained through seminar sessions and seminar-related events into one culminating event, which will take place in a dedicated space and be opened up to the public. This event will present a valuable opportunity for dialogue and exchange (verbal, visual, performative, etc.) between our class and the other MSPS-linked courses, the Department, the University, and the City.

Required Texts:
Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age (Routledge, 2004).
David Morley, Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity (Routledge, 2000).
Howard Rheingold, Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution (Perseus, 2002).

CLASSROOM SESSION 1:
Tuesday, Sept 6

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


CLASSROOM SESSION 2:
Tuesday, Sept 13

Public Spheres: Spaces of Mediated Commerce and Control

Agenda: 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” ...

- David Morley, “Introduction” In Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity (Routledge, 2000).

EVENT SESSION 3: FIELD TRIP: PLACE: EAST HARLEM GALLERY
Week of Sept. 19

Public Spheres: Spaces of Mediated Commerce and Control

- David Morley, Chapters 1 & 2 In Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity (Routledge, 2000).

EVENT SESSION 4: INAUGURAL EVENT FOR MEDIA SPACE ][ PUBLIC SPACE
Tuesday Sept. 27 (during class time)

Public Spheres: Spaces of Mediated Commerce and Control

- David Morley, Chapters 3 & 4 In Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity (Routledge, 2000).
- Shaun Morres, “The Doubling of Place: Electronic Media, Time-Space Arrangements and Social Relationships” In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age (Routledge,

- Michael Bull: “To Each Their Own Bubble: Mobile Spaces of Sound in the City,” In Nick Couldry & Anna McCarthy, Eds., MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age (Routledge, 2004): 275-293.

EVENT SESSION 5:
October 4

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

Agenda: Continuing to identify overarching themes and synthetic theories. Brainstorming for the Culminating Event

Probes: 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 Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity (Routledge, 2000).
- Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin and Gill Valentine, “Thinking Space and Place,” “Intellectual and Disciplinary Genealogies” In Key Thinkers on Space and Place (Sage, 2004): 3-15.

EVENT SESSION 6: FIELD TRIP: INVISIBLE CITIES
Week of Oct 10

BCCP site, a.k.a. “the Hub,” which is located in a gymnasium in Roosevelt Hall at Brooklyn College. Workshop would take place in part there and in part at the junction/cross-section of Nostrand and Flatbush Avenues.

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

CLASSROOM SESSION 3:
Week of Oct 17

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

Event Session 8:
Week of Oct 2

Places: Cultural Geographies, Places of Mediated Meaning and Identity

CLASSROOM SESSION 9:
November 1

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 Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity (Routledge, 2000).
Event Session 10  
Week of Nov. 7

**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 *Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity* (Routledge, 2000): 149-245.

CLASSROOM SESSION 11:  
November 15

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

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

**Probes:** 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


Event Session 12  
Week of November 21

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


CLASSROOM SESSION 13:  
November 29

In-class Workshop to prepare for culminating event.
CULMINATING EVENT SESSION 14:
DECEMBER 13

CLASSROOM SESSION 15:
December 20
Giving what we’ve made and done a share-able shape and form.