urban media lab: *waste*

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This pamphlet documents seminar research and projects for Urban Media Lab: Waste, a project-based seminar taught by Jessica Blaustein in The New School Department of Media Studies and Film, Spring 2011. All documentation has been produced solely for educational purposes, for private use by its contributors and not for commercial distribution to others. NO part of this pamphlet may be used, reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means for non-educational purposes.

| seminar files

overview

In the context of macroecological and financial crises that have dramatically shifted attention toward the management of multiple forms of garbage, excess and inefficiency, **Urban Media Lab: Waste** explores the cultural logics and politics of waste in contemporary urban life. Registered in terms of space (blight, sprawl, vacancy), time (waiting, boredom, drudgery), resources (refuse, trash), and increasingly in terms of digital information technologies (e-waste, obsolescence, "delete"), waste marks the residue, the left-over, the cast-off, the remainder, the damaged, the unclassifiable, the useless.

Especially at a time when our virtual and material worlds are designed to streamline and optimize urban life at all scales – from operative landscapes to responsive systems to productivity software - our cultural definitions and regulations of waste are central to the ordering of our environments and ourselves. Grounded in an understanding of the city as the irreducible density of people, built environments, and information architectures, this seminar interprets the history of waste through the double lenses of urban development and media cultures.

structure

Urban Media Lab: Waste is divided into two parts: *base concepts* which establish theoretical foundations for the study of waste through the lenses of key texts in cultural and social theory, urban studies, and architectural history, and *case studies* which apply those theoretical tools toward in-depth investigations of specific urban conditions. Research is accompanied throughout by a range of art and design experiments that take up waste as matter for critique, reuse, or reinvention. Coursework is project-focused, drawing upon New York City as a laboratory for expanded research and intervention.

requirements

Participation (fundamental)
This seminar is student-driven and project-focused, therefore everyone's full engagement with the material within and in extension of the classroom is prerequisite to its success.

Blog Contributions 25%
In advance of each meeting, seminar participants are asked to contribute thoughts and response to the week's materials on the course website. Entries need not demonstrate a mastery over material, but rather a meaningful engagement with the issues in the readings, with urban research sites, or with any and all aspects in the news. There are no artificially imposed length or format requirements for blog contributions; they may include questions, speculations, critique and incorporate images, video, and other media. Students are expected to read the posts of their peers, and encouraged to engage them in dialogue online and in the classroom.

Urban Research: Site Map/Catalogue 25%
Students will contribute on a weekly basis to a collective catalogue of waste-related sites that relate to the course material over the semester. The catalog takes the form of a custom google map, and sites can include a broad range of built and imagined landscapes, social and cultural practices, and art and design projects. Each contribution should take the form of a brief, but thick description, or tag, that provides a window into the given site. A tag can incorporate text, image, or video, and it can include links to other places. The point of a tag is to share something interesting about a site, not present a generic or encyclopedic entry about it. Tags can incorporate the news, art, policy, politics. They can pull from the present or the past, 'high' culture or 'low', the library or the street. All contributions to the collective map will be loosely organized within seven broadly defined and overlapping categories - material waste, disposal sites, wasted space, wasted time, waste reuse projects + practices, other art projects + actions, and unbuilt architectures + landscapes.

Over the first half of the semester, specific sites or directives for site investigations will be listed on the course schedule after required course readings. Over the course of the second half of the semester, students are asked to continue their urban research more independently, in a direction of their choosing. Students may decide to develop a specific focus around a topical issue (e.g., asthma in low income communities), a place or series of places (Fresh Kills, or street trash cans in Midtown), a time or times of day (garbage pickup in Park Slope), or any number of other possible options. The urban research must be continued in an independent fashion, and students do have the option to link it up to their developing case study research if they choose to do so; however it must also stand on its own as a separate component of their coursework.

Case Study (Presentation + Final Form) 50%
After the Spring break, all classes will be focused around specific case studies of what are commonly referred to as "waste streams." A waste stream is the flow of waste from generation to collection to disposal. When people refer to different waste "streams", they are typically referring to a category of separated waste that is all of the same type. While there are many different kinds of waste streams, we will use the New York City Department of Sanitation's classifications of residential waste streams as a starting point for case study research and projects this semester. Drawing directly or indirectly from these categories, each case study will focus upon a single waste stream, but approach it in a radically interdisciplinary way, bringing media studies to bear on both the content and the form of the research.

The NYC Department of Sanitation's Bureau of Waste Prevention Reuse and Recycling lists "four types of residential waste-streams that the Department of Sanitation is responsible for collecting (http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/html/resources/wcs.shtml#wastestreams):
- **Refuse**: the contents of the trash bags and cans (and bulk refuse items) that NYC residents set out for collection
- **Paper Recycling**: the contents of the paper recycling bags and bins that NYC residents put out for collection
- **Metals/Glass/Plastic/Beverage Cartons** (MGP) Recycling: the contents of the MGP recycling bags and bins (and bulk metal items)
- that NYC residents put out for collection
- **Street Basket Waste (Refuse)**: the contents of the litter baskets located on NYC street corners for pedestrian use (Note: street basket waste was not studied during the Preliminary WCS)"

There are a total of five case studies in this seminar. Four derive directly from the waste streams listed above, and a fifth – **Electronic Waste** - has been added to account for what *The New York Times* called in 2007 "the fastest growing piece of the nation's municipal waste stream" ("Time to Deal with E-Waste" 9 Dec 2007).

Structural Guidelines
Case studies are to be developed and presented by small groups of 2-3 students. They are detailed and multifaceted inquiries, exploratory and descriptive collections of materials that work together to communicate an in-depth account of a specific subject. As a starting point, groups can explore the preliminary resources listed on the course schedule for each case, but all are encouraged to expand from there. Groups will determine the approach and format of each case study, but all final case studies must include a title page, an introduction, evidence of primary research, a strong New York City-specific component, a visual catalogue of examples, a bibliography of references, and an individual contribution from each member of the group. Individual contributions can be

interpreted in terms of content (i.e., each individual contributes a written or visual essay), in terms of role or function (i.e., someone is photographer, someone is designer, someone is editor), or in several other ways. Note that individual contributions are to supplement the collaboratively produced case study, not to stand in its place. Note: Individual Contributions 20% of Final Case Study Grade

Conceptual Guidelines
- Approach interdisciplinarily. Media Studies is by definition an interdisciplinary field. Bring your training to bear on both the form and the content of your research.
- Put in cultural, historical, social context(s). This is not a seminar in environmental science. Do not limit your scope to the analysis of data, as those in other fields are presumably better equipped to do so.
- Track from beginnings to ends. Waste streams are about the flow of waste from generation to collection to disposal. You can approach this literally, but you are also encouraged to take creative license.
- Scale up. The NYC Dept of Sanitation's classifications apply to residential waste streams, and the rhetoric is aimed at the individual citizen-consumer. Reapproach this same material in ways that connect it to larger systems, relating the individual scale to municipal, regional, commercial, institutional, industrial, and/or global scales.
- Scale out. These waste streams are also largely defined by their materiality. Without losing focus on the material -- since a great deal of work in our class is to understand the material undersides, outputs, and excesses of our information economy – consider what it means to expand an analysis of waste streams to include other senses (think noise pollution), dimensions (arethere street waste baskets in Second Life?), or experiences (can wifi leakage be considered household waste?).

Presentation (beginning March 23 as per course schedule)
Each group will use a class period as a creative and critical platform for the presentation of their case study, which will be submitted in final form at the end of the semester. Presentation format and style are to be determined by each group. It is understood that case studies presented will be works-in-process, and students are encouraged to use the class time as an opportunity for critical response and feedback from their peers, or even as an instrument that contributes in some way to the final case study itself. If presentations are to involve A/V equipment, please be sure to inform me of your intentions in advance, and to arrive early to set-up.

Final Form (due May 16 at noon)
Refer to final formatting and submission guidelines on the course website.

schedule

1.26 Hello

2.2 Base 1: Evacuations: Out of Sight, Out of Mind?
- Italo Calvino, "Continuous Cities I (Leonia)", Invisible Cities (1972) 114-116
- Mary Douglas, excerpts from Introduction and Chapter 2 "Secular Defilement," Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo (London: Routledge, 1966)
- Mierle Laderman Ukeles, "Manifesto for Maintenance Art " (1969); and for context and reference, read Robert C. Morgan, "Touch Sanitation: Mierle Laderman Ukeles" (1982)

Sites, Real and Imagined (Look into one of the sites below, and create a brief descriptive 'tag' for it.
- Benjamin Ward Richardson, "Hygeia: A City of Health" (1876)
- Kevin Lynch, "A Waste Cacotopia" and "A Wasteless Cacotopia," Wasting Away (1990) 3-10
- Fresh Kills
- Meadowlands
- Gowanus Canal
- NYC Waste Transfer Stations: Bronx Hunts Point, Brooklyn Greenpoint-Williamsburg

2.9 Base 2: Wasting Space (Heterotopias, Terrain Vagues, Drosscapes, Junkspace)
- Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias" (1967)
- Kevin Lynch, "The Waste of Place,"Places 6.2 (1990)
- Alan Berger, the following excerpts from Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America (2006): 1) Ch 1 "Discourses for Landscape and Urbanization" 2) "Waste Landscapes of Exchange" section from Ch 4
- Ignasi de Sola-Morales, "Terrain Vague," Anyplace, Ed. Cynthia Davidson (1995)
- Julia Christensen, Introduction to Big Box Reuse (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008) 1-10, and browse reuse sites on Christensen's project website
- Rem Koolhaas, "Junkspace," October 100 (Spring 2002) 175-90 [*NOTE: skim only]

Sites
- Find and tag two examples of waste spaces in NYC that might fall under the category of Michel Foucault's 'heterotopia' or Ignasi de Sola-Morales' 'terrain vague'

2.16 Base 3: Material Circulations (Production, Consumption, and Reuse)
- Heather Rogers, Ch 2 "Rubbish Past", Ch 4 section "Scavenging Transformed", and Ch 5 "The Golden Age of Waste" from Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage (2005)
- Elizabeth Royte, Introduction "Quantifying in the Kitchen" from Garbage Land: On the Secret Trail of Trash (2005)
- Vance Packard, Ch 6 "Progress through Planned Obsolescence" and Ch 7 "Planned Obsolescence of Desirability" in The Waste Makers (1960) 53-77

- TrashTrack, MIT SENSEable City Lab, http://senseable.mit.edu/trashtrack/
- William McDonough and Michael Braungart, "A Brief History of the Industrial Revolution" in Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things (2002) 18-23
- David Harvey, Ch 8 "Fordism" (Read on Googlebooks) and Ch 9 "From Fordism to Flexible Accumulation" in The Conditions of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change (1990)
- Alan Berger, "Post-Fordism: Waste Landscapes of Accumulation" in Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America (2006)

Sites
- Find and tag one example of material refuse (trash) and one example of material reuse in NYC or surroundings. Try to relate your two sites – this could be done geographically (they are co-located, for example), thematically (they both have to do with the same subject matter, but one is trash and the other is not), materially (maybe they are both made out of paper), formally (they are both the same color), or in a myriad of other ways.

2.23 Base 4: Wasting Time (The Other Sides of Efficiency)
"The passage of time is to be recorded on the debit side of human life projects; it brings losses, not gains. The passage of time portends the waste of opportunities that ought to have been grasped and consumed as they came." — Zygmunt Bauman

In lieu of class meeting, here are instructions for on-line work this week: 1) Contribute to blog discussion about the readings on waiting and (in)efficiencies. The readings are short. Try to connect back to previous weeks' discussions, and talk to each other! Your contribution can be a new post, but it can also take the form of a comment to someone else's; 2) Post to the blog one example of a contemporary productivity platform, software, or other tool that purportedly streamlines, optimizes our lives; 3) Document on the WASTEmap some example of wasting time (see Sites below).

On waiting
- Zygmunt Bauman, excerpts from Ch4 "Culture of Waste", Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts (2004) 104-113 on waiting, and 124-5 on speed dating
- Tom Vanderbilt, "Waiting in Line, Waiting in Traffic: Why the Other Lane Always Moves Faster" in Traffic: Why We Drive the Way We Do (And What it Says About Us) (2008) 40-45
- (A few addt'l recommended readings on waiting for those interested: David Maister, "The Psychology of Waiting Lines" (1985) and Adam Phillips's "On Being Bored" from On Kissing, Tickling, and Being Bored: Psychoanalytic Essays on the Unexamined Life (1993) which helps to explain the differences between waiting and boredom)

On (in)efficiencies:
- William McDonough and Michael Braungart, Ch 2 "Why Being Less Bad is No Good", from Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things (2002) *focus on definition of eco-efficiency page 51, critique of downcycling 59 (why the critique? what does this have to do with time?), and 63-67*
- Susan Strasser, "The Lure of Convenience," from Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash (1999) 181-7

Sites
- What does is it mean to map time? especially time that is considered misused, lost, wasted? Document on the WASTEmap some moment(s) of wasting, wasted time.

3.2 Base 5: Informal Cities
- Mike Davis, Ch 6 "Slum Ecology" from Planet of Slums (2006) 121-50
- Teddy Cruz, "A City Made of Waste," The Nation (16 February 2009)
- Alfredo Brillembourg and Hubert Klumpner, "Failure of the Formal," in Power: Producing the Contemporary City, ed. Berlege Institute (2007) and "Co-Ownership," Al Manakh: Dubai Guide, Gulf Survey, in Volume (2009) 388-93
- George Packer, "The Megacity: Decoding the Chaos of Lagos" The New Yorker (November 13, 2006)
- Akash Kapur, "Letter from India: Indian Scavengers Doing What Officials Can't" New York Times (January 19, 2011)

Sites: This week we go global. Please investigate and tag one of the following sites on the WASTEmap. Most of these sites appear in Mike Davis's Planet of Slums under his list "30 Largest Megaslums," and a few others have been added (28). (*Note: please check the map before moving forward so as to avoid too many overlaps. It's fine if a few sites receive multiple tags, but better to cover as many sites as possible.)
- Neza-Chalco-Izta, Mexico City
- Sadr City, Baghdad
- Soweto, Gauteng
- Orangi Township, Karachi
- Pikine, Dakar, Senegal
- Manshiet Nasser, Cairo
- Dharavi, Mumbai
- Kibera, Nairobi
- Islamshahr, Tehran
- Cite-Soleil, Port-au-Prince
- Heliopolis, Sao Paolo
- Rocinha, Rio de Janiero
- Korail, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Bahay Toro, Manila

3.9 Base 6: Information Management (Information Overload, System Failures, E-Waste)
- "The Data Deluge," The Economist (25 February 2010); and "Data, Data Everywhere," Special Report, The Economist (25 February 2010)
- Zygmunt Bauman, excerpt from introduction to Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts (2004) (This is also where you will find "Waste is the dark, shameful secret of all production")
- Tim Jordan, highlighted sections on information overload from "Cyberpower: The Culture and Politics of Cyberspace" (1999) see

5-8 (for another version of this text, see New School Library's electronic version of Jordan's Living with Cyberspace: Technology and Society in the Twenty-first Century, 125-126

- Browse Jussi Parikka's blog posts on spam, especially "More Spam to the World" and "Recycling Centre for Digital Waste, or how to stop worrying, and love spam, porn and viruses" (Jussi Parikka is one of the editors of The Spam Book, Hampton Press, 2009)
- Browse Information Ecology Research Group at MIT Media Lab
- Ann Blair, "Information Overload, Then and Now" The Chronicle Review (28 November 2010)
- Jennifer Gabrys, "Media in the Dump," Alphabet City: Trash, Ed. John Knechtel (2007) 156-65

Sites
- Please use your site tag this week as a first step toward focusing your urban research forward for the rest of the semester. (Therefore your tag may not have anything to do with information management. Rather you are deciding how you want to proceed, and marking some place, somehow, accordingly.)

3.16 [SPRING BREAK]

PART TWO: CASE STUDIES

3.23 Case 1: Household Refuse (Gala, Jenny, Lara)
Consider among other things: the privatization of waste – 'taking out the trash' – garbage disposals – garbage guerrillas – garbage collection – landfills -incineration – composting – free-cycling – - -

Required reading for all
- Italo Calvino, "La Poubelle Agreee", The Road to San Giovanni (1993) 93-126

Preliminary resources for case study group
- Mira Engler, Ch2 "Private Landscapes of Waste" in Designing America's Waste Landscapes (2004); see also Ch 3 Dumps and Ch 5 Sewage Treatment Plants
- Jean Brennan, squanderless.com (inspired by Calvino's "La Poubelle Agreee")
- Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), Garbage Problems (2002) – "an investigative curriculum about the wastes of New York City"
- The Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI), Post Consumed: The Landscape of Waste in Los Angeles (an exhibit about the residential waste stream in Los Angeles, May-October 2008; was included in group exhibit Into the Open: Positioning Practice at US pavilion of Venice Architecture Biennale; includes useful inventory of trash – "What's in the trash?")
- William L. Rathje, The Garbage Project (1973-) and William L. Rathje and Cullen Murphy, Rubbish!: The Archaeology of Garbage (2001)
- Wang Jiuliang, "A City Besieged by Waste" (photo documentation of mounting waste problem facing Beijing) – see slide show here and video here

3.25 Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Visit @ noon

3.30 Case 2: Paper (Ran, Ray)
Consider among other things: print media – packaging – Mctrash – paper industry – hygiene – the paperless office – post-its – junk mail – paper money – -

Required for all
- Elizabeth Royte, Ch 12 "It's Coming on Christmas" in Garbage Land: On the Secret Trail of Trash (2005)
- Susan Strasser, "Cleanliness and Paper Products" in Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash (1999) 173-181

Group 2 preliminary resources
- David M. Henken, City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York (1998)
- Witold Rybczynski, "We are What We Throw Away," New York Times (5 July 1992)
- William Davies King, Collections of Nothing (2008) and see NPR story here and NYTimes book review here
- Sellen and Harper, The Myth of the Paperless Office (2002)
- The Industrial Book, 1840-1880, Ed. Scott E. Casper (2007) – see Michael Winship's "Manufacturing and Book Production"
- HA Schult, Now! (1983) (paper river in NYC made of old issues of New York Times - look for news coverage January 1983, article Thomas Hoepker) and other projects including Trash People (1996) and Save the Beach Hotel (2010), see http://www.haschult.de/
- Susan Coolen, Pliez, see project website and documentation in Alphabet City: Trash (2001)
- David Macaulay, Motel of the Mysteries (1979)
- Jennifer Gabrys, "Leaflet Drop: The Paper Landscapes of War" Invisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture (2004)

4.6 Case 3: Metals/Glass/**Plastic (Elizabeth, Stasos, Vicky)
Consider among other things: disposables and the culture of convenience - water bottles – take-out - Tupperware – toys – plastic surgery – toxicity (BPA scares and other) – inflatables – - -

Required for all
- Roland Barthes, "Plastic" in Mythologies (1972)
- Jeffrey L. Meikle, Introduction, American Plastic: A Cultural History (1997)

Group 3 preliminary resources
- Elizabeth Royte, "Satan's Resin" in Garbage Land: On the Secret Trail of Trash (2005) 176-194
- Heather Rogers, "Plastics" in Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage (2005)
- Gay Hawkins, "Plastic Bags: Living with Rubbish," International Journal of Cultural Studies 4.1 (2001)
- Tomas Saraceno, museo aero solar, see also www.air-port-city.org and coverage of the project at the Walker Art Center , see also Saraceno's other work with plastic here

4.13 Film: Manufactured Landscapes, Dir. Jennifer Baichwal (Zeitgeist Films, 2006)
The film will be screened in the classroom and will last 90 minutes. Please continue blog contributions and urban research as usual this week.

4.20 Individual Case Study Work
Seminar is not meeting this week; Instead use the time to meet with your group to substantially progress toward the final form of your case study. Continue blog contributions and urban research this week.

4.27 Case 5: Electronic Waste (Cindy, Kasia, 99)
Consider among other things: e-waste – format obsolescence – dead media – delete

Required for all
• Elizabeth Grossman, Ch 1 "The Underside of High-Tech," High Tech Trash: Digital Devices, Hidden Toxics, and Human Health (2006)
• Lisa Parks, "Falling Apart: Electronics Salvaging and the Global Media Economy" In Charles R. Aclund, ed., Residual Media (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007): 32-47 (See other chapters in this collection as well)
• Heather Rogers, "Consume Locally, Dump Globally" in Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Trash (2005) 200-205

Group 5 preliminary resources
• Giles Slade, Made to Break: Technology and Obsolescence in America (Harvard University Press, 2006)
• Richard Maxwell & Toby Miller, "E-Waste: Elephant in the Living Room" FlowTV (December 2, 2008).
• Basel Action Network's "Exporting Harm: The High-Tech Trashing of Asia" (February 25, 2002; see also film trailer here and stream film here) and "Digital Dump: Exporting Re-use and Abuse to Africa" (24 October 2005; see also film trailer here and stream film here)
• Gopal Krishna, "E-Waste: Computers and Toxicity in India," Sarai Reader: Shaping Technologies (2003)
• Adam Knee, "Celebrity Skins," Framing Celebrity: New Directions in Celebrity Culture (2006)

5.4 Case 4: Street Basket Waste (Duncan, Jen, s.o.)
Consider among other things: street cleaning – street cleaners – litter – sanitary reform – Keep America Beautiful campaign – greenwashing – dumpster diving – -

Required for all
• Heather Rogers, "Green Machine", Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage (2005), 141-6 (and see Keep America Beautiful Inc.)
• Michelle Coyne, "From Production to Destruction to Recovery: Freeganism's Redefinition of Food Value and Circulation" Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies 10 (2009)

- TrashTrack, MIT SENSEable City Lab (you've already seen this project in Base 3, but worth a revisit!)
- JooYoun Paek and David Jimison, "Too Smart Trashcan" (2009) (scroll down, 2nd project listed), and see video proposal for project here

Group 4 preliminary resources
- Susan Strasser, excerpts from Ch 4 "Trash and Refuse Transformed", Waste and Want: a Social History of Trash (1999) 118-25
- Tina Kendall, "Utopia Gleaners" in Alphabet City: Trash (2007) 222-9
- Heather Rogers, "Message in a Bottle" Alphabet City: Trash, Ed. John Knechtel (2007) 112-31
- Laurie Essig, "Fine Diving," Salon (10 June 2002)
- See additional bibliographies on dumpster diving at Michael Kucher, Student Bibliographies for a Natural History of Garbage (Winter 2001)

5.6 Complete Urban Research
All WASTEmap site tags should be uploaded by the end of this day. Make sure your name appears on all of your tags for the semester.

5.11 Last Day of Class: Compilation
Case study groups will update on the status of their works in progress. Visuals (on USB drives, or online ready to call up) are welcome!

5.16 Last Day to Submit Final Case Study
All case studies must be self-published on Lulu *and* uploaded to the course website by noon. See case study formatting and submission guidelines for detailed instructions.

participants

Jessica Blaustein's research, teaching, and editorial activities span architecture, literature, and material culture.

Duncan Cooper normally writes about music.

Lara Heintz is currently a grad student at the New School for media studies. She enjoys balmy nights, river valley explorations, roadside tacos, riding bikes, and not talking about what she's going to do with a degree in media studies.

Nee Billy Bob Scranton, **99 Hooker** is easily confused as to which is the waste and which is the productive. Hopes to sort it out sooner rather than later. Has excess down so there is hope.

Jenny Kane explores the city by bike and works in the film business. She recently moved across the river to Brooklyn after many years in the East Village.

Yeong Ran Kim is an independent filmmaker and currently pursuing an MA in Media Studies at the New School. Since 2005, she has directed and co-produced five, short and feature films, with the most recent work, Red Maria that examines the intersection of global capitalism and working class women's lives in Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea. Critically engaging in the politics of knowledge production, she explores a sensory ethnography and media technologies in its practice and theory. You can see and hear her recent work at http://brooklynsound.site40.net/

Tassos Kleidonopoulos a.k.a. lockbird [conducting a "literal" translation of his greek last name], was born and raised in Athens, Greece. Although there are a couple of turning points in his life that he did not make the choice that led him to the next level, the majority of the rest was pure curiosity; curiosity that in retrospective turned out to be audacious subconscious. While studying Social Anthropology "by chance", his passions were cinema, music and cooking and experiences like volunteering at the Athens Olympic Games, studying in Paris, working in film festivals and going to the army for 18 months were literally transforming, mentally and physically. Watching his dream of being a grad student in NYC come to life in 2011, he is now terrified of 2012.

Gala Lutteroth is a story teller born in Mexico City. She studied English Literature at UNAM, and is currently getting her masters at The New School in the Media Studies and Film program in New York City.

Elizabeth Zephyrine McDonough is originally from Durham, North Carolina and began her waste studies in 2006 with a year abroad program called "Rethinking Globalization" (she began her personal studies in "wasting time" much earlier). She is thrilled to have been a part of this class and is interested in finding ways to eliminate global notions of "waste" and "scarcity" by developing more sane and balanced relationships between people and resources.

Victoria Ng is a graduate student in the Media Studies program at The New School with an interest in multimedia design, film editing, and graphic animation.

s.o. is an experimental realist and sometimes sound artist.

Ray Pfaff is currently a graduate student in the New School's Master in Media Studies program. Ray is balancing his time between his academic pursuits, his work as a freelance graphic designer and his urban decay and propaganda based projects. His goal among other things is to travel through various states documenting sites of urban decay and remnants of propagated messages of the past and compiling a production series out of his findings. Influences include Matthew Merett, John Heartfield and Banksy.

Cindy Pound has spent the past 15 years producing interactive digital experiences for clients such as Sony, Charles Schwab, The Smithsonian Institution, Continental Airlines, Electronic Arts, Tiffany and Company, and L'Oreal. Currently she holds the position of Executive Producer of Mobile and Social Platforms at R/GA and also serves on the National Board of Delegates of the New Media Council of the Producers Guild of America. She has just completed her MA in Media Studies at The New School. Cindy has recently taken an active interest in the issue of electronic waste and is planning to bring more awareness and activism to her professional pursuits in the months to come.

Jen Rhee is interested in the intersections of language, materiality, technology, and craft in contemporary media forms (including internet how-tos, skillshares, and "cut and paste" culture). She spends her days at Parsons The New School for Design working on print, web, and multimedia publications.

Kasia Witek writes of herself, "I am shoulders, arms and fingertips on end. I am head and its hair on top. I am also skin. I experience daily disappointments but I never speak of boredom."