

# School for Designing a Society



## Fall 2011 Class Schedule

Time/Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
3:00-3:50pm		<b>The Gaze.</b> Meadow Jones & Safiya Noble	<b>How to Read: Cybernetics &amp; Patriarchy.</b> Mark Enslin & Susan Parenti	<b>Political Economy.</b> Michael Brun
4:00-4:50pm		<b>How to Make Change in a System.</b> Danielle Chynoweth <i>- alternating weekly with -</i> <b>Liberation Ecology.</b> Rafter Sass Ferguson	<b>Fundamentals Without Fundamentalism.</b> Melanie Hinojosa & Jacob Barton	
5:00-5:50pm			<b>Language Interventions.</b> Melanie Hinojosa & Jacob Barton	
6:30-8:00pm		<b>Community Theater / Voice Labs.</b> Elizabeth Simpson		
7:00-10:00pm	<b>Composition Ensemble Incubation.</b> Susan Parenti & Mark Enslin	<b>Discovering Love's Intelligence.</b> Patch Adams, MD 7:30-9:30pm, 9/20, 10/18, 11/29.		

The **School for Designing a Society**, founded in 1992, is a project for people who want to change society by means of composition, design, performance, and care.

We approach those problems which -- we assert -- cannot be solved within the system/structure/context in which they arise. In order to solve them, we need to compose and design new systems/structures/contexts .

How to do that?

SDaS is housed in the IMC (Independent Media Center) 202 South Broadway, Urbana  
Apply and read more: [www.designingasociety.net](http://www.designingasociety.net)

## CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

**Composition Ensemble Incubation.** Susan Parenti, Mark Enslin, presiding presiders, waiting to be de-throned. Meetings at the Herbert Brün House, 122 Franklin Street, Urbana. Starting Monday, September 12, 7-10pm

*Composition:* when you bring about that which would not have happened without you.

*Ensemble:* a togetherness of cooperation and commitment of time to perform, enact, or realize the compositions of the members of the ensemble.

*Incubation:* the environment in which these activities can happily get started and be sustained—whatever it takes: respect for mistakes, false starts, going-out-on-a-limb, getting stuck, changes of mind, putting aside, salvaging; practice, rehearsal, woodshedding; mutual encouragement, care, curiosity ... whatever it takes.

**The Gaze.** Meadow Jones, Safiya Noble

How have 'otherization' frameworks based on power been constructed through performance and "the gaze" in the United States? This course considers racialized, gendered, and sexualized performances in such historical and contemporary sites that contribute to the objectification and commodification of people and culture. We will pay particular attention to how subjects deconstruct dominant ideologies of racial, cultural, gender, and sexual difference and engage in forms of social and political mobilization.

Key questions include: • How are vision and visual representation implicated in the objectification of some human beings and the empowerment of others? • How are deviant identities controlled through visibility and invisibility? • How do images mediate our ability to relate to the suffering of others? • How do technologies affect who can speak with authority about the state and condition of the body?

**Liberation Ecology.** Rafter Sass Ferguson

What does sustainability look like when it refuses to sustain white supremacy? What is the meaning of liberation in a civilization that cannot feed or fuel itself? The choice between ecological objectives and social objectives is lose-lose. Rather than make it, we can unveil the connections between the two sets of issues, and create strategies for change that build on those connections. This class will weave together two elements: principles of ecological design, and exploration of the relationship between real and desired ecosystems and real and desired societies.

**How to Make a Change in a System.** Danielle Chynoweth

What is the problem? What is it that you want? How can that be a criteria for your design? Where is the vulnerability in the system? How can you be a point of leverage for change? Sessions will be exercise oriented, with a brief presentation and assignments to be worked through in class.

**Discovering Love's Intelligence:** a laboratory. Patch Adams MD. Tuesdays, 7:30--9:30pm September 20th, October 18th, November 29th.

FLASH!!!!---Love might be an intelligence, not simply an emotion. Investigation underway!

Prerequisite for participation: submit a one page description of why you think this may be an important subject, and what you have already discovered. Send by September 16th to [kate@patchadams.org](mailto:kate@patchadams.org)

**Voicing Lessons.** Elizabeth Simpson

Part One: We will meet to collectively enhance our individual capacity to vocalize via exercises for the breath, body and voice. Part Two (second half of semester): We will design language with which to exercise our newly enhanced ability to (physically) speak.

**Community Theatre Lab.** Elizabeth Simpson

1/5 hours, weekly for 5 weeks. Then, TBD (open to community). Each session begins with games which serve to heighten our senses, de-mechanize the body, and interrupt habitual behavior. As the mechanisms break, sparks fly and new fires can begin. We will then use our liberated forms to confront a current problem in our community (in conjunction with one of our local social justice organizations) through techniques drawn from Theater of the Oppressed, crafting and discovering wanted alternatives to undesirable decisions.

**Political Economy.** Michael Brün

How to comprehend current events and current talk about economic issues. Why the 'political' in political economy is relevant.

**How to Read with a Systems Look:** Texts on Cybernetics (Mark Enslin), Texts on Patriarchy (Susan Parenti)

*Texts on Patriarchy:* The context for these readings is to view patriarchy as both a system---something that has been 'looked' a system---and as something that is a blob, a complex thing which now requires a systems look.

*Texts on Cybernetics:* Cybernetics is an explicitly self-referential study of cognition: our perceptions & theories & desires & blindspots—thus an indispensable help in designing a society. We will try out, via reading, some approaches to cybernetics, and, via cybernetics, try out some approaches to reading: answer a question, raise questions, perform as script or score, taunt composition.

**Language Interventions.** Melanie Hinojosa, Jacob Barton

Tired of walking a talk which actively prevents you from designing a society, inhabiting that society, or inhabiting this one? A practicum in unwriting new rules and un hiding ultimatums, on Twitter and at the dinner table. Non-affirmative support group for word hackers and hacks guarantees results, or your language back!

**Fundamentals without Fundamentalism.** Melanie Hinojosa, Jacob Barton

The School for Designing a Society invites participants to design a society you desire---rather than resigning yourself to the society which is. This shift---towards desire and design, away from resignation and 'is'---requires rigor and creativity in your thinking, feeling, speaking. The seminar, Fundamentals without Fundamentalism, offers concepts and distinctions and games and a practicum for your participation in the project of Designing a Society.

**Design Sessions.** Elizabeth Simpson

There's a discomfort with the current circumstances, and a desire to do or be something different. But where are we coming from, and in going towards where we want to be, what is to be sought and what to be avoided?