Fall 2010
Tu / Th 12:00-1:15 Prof. Katherine Pandora
kpandora@ou.edu

HSCI 2333
Inventing the Modern World

From the moment we wake up in the morning and even while we sleep, from the time we are born until the time we die, in our work, our play, and our thinking and feeling – the machines we invent and the tools we use every day are inextricably interwoven into our personal experiences, the nature of our societies, and the lives of nations. In this class we’ll draw examples from the history of technology & culture to explore what it means to invent the modern world, using the past to help us make better sense of our present – and of our possible futures.

We’ll get an overview of the thousand-year history of technology in world civilization, and examine case studies of machine-human experience that range from the Civil War ironclads, to the moral economies of invention with Thomas Edison, the Wright Brothers, and Philo T. Farnsworth (the inventor of television!), and ideas about the modern city . . . and what it means to live in a world of want and waste in the wake of the Industrial Revolution.