

ME 4803 / ID 4843 Design Across Disciplines
Fall 2015 / TR 1:30-3:00

David Rosen, ME
Sabir Khan, ARCH / ID

Repair in Mind: Designing / Making / Remaking

Both the idea and the act of repairing is not something central to a designer's toolkit and mindset today. The mid-century notion of "planned obsolescence" that gave rise to consumer society lives on: design, especially in industry and in the academy, seeks the new and the innovative; the default procedure valorizes a fresh start each time.

Yet the ethos of "repairing" continues to resonate in our society and in our lives. We see it in DIY and "hands-on" projects; in the values of thrift, craft, and ingenuity; and in the creative actions that drive hacking, mending, fixing, upcycling.

This course explores both the hands-on process of repairing something as well as what a design process that privileges "repair" could produce.

There are two projects:

1. Making / Re-making through Repairing. Students will work with and on something "broken" exploring where repairing -- as both act and attitude -- takes them and the object they are working on. The objects selected could range in scale, material, and complexity: products, devices, mechanisms, materials, code . . .

2. Designing For Repair. Students will design with "repair in mind". How does one conceptualize repair? How does one design and fabricate an object, device, or product that anticipates future repair?

The rich set of issues and practices that animate "repairing as a creative act" will be explored through lecture presentations and discussions. Students will be expected to engage and contribute to these discussions.

Students will have access to shops in both ME and COA.