



The Science Technology Culture Research Group presents – in association with the Department of the Built Environment's Architectural Humanities Group – a research symposium on:

**“Cybernetics: From the ontological theatre to the environmental crisis”**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010  
2:00 – 5:30pm

Department of the Built Environment  
Sustainable Research Building (SRB) Seminar Room

With guest speakers:

**Jon Goodbun** (University of Westminster)

**Bernard Geoghegan** (Northwestern University/Bauhaus-Universität Weimar)

and

**Professor Andrew Pickering** (University of Exeter) – author of *The*

*Cybernetic Brain: Sketches of Another Future* (Chicago University Press, 2010)

“Cybernetics - roughly, the study of systems - is often thought of as a grim science of control. But as Andrew Pickering reveals in this beguiling book, a much more lively and experimental strain of cybernetics can be traced from the 1940s to the present. *The Cybernetic Brain* explores a largely forgotten group of British thinkers, including Grey Walter, Ross Ashby, Gregory Bateson, R. D. Laing, Stafford Beer, and Gordon Pask, and their singular work in a dazzling array of fields. Psychiatry, engineering, management, politics, music, architecture, education, tantric yoga, the Beats, and the '60s counterculture all come into play as Pickering follows the history of cybernetics' impact on the world, from contemporary robotics and complexity theory to the Chilean economy under Salvador Allende. What underpins this fascinating history, Pickering contends, is a shared but unconventional vision of the world as ultimately unknowable, a place where genuine novelty is always emerging.”

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