**The George Washington University**

***University Seminar on Systems and Cybernetics***

**TBD, TBD, 2019, 10 a.m. to noon**

**Funger Hall 620**

**2201 G Street NW**

**How I Found Gaia: Systems Theory and the Development of Gaia Discourse**

Bruce Clarke

I will begin by retracing the path that led me to Gaia-- a simultaneous exposure to neocybernetic systems theory on the one hand, and the work of the American evolutionary thinker Lynn Margulis on the other, in particular, in its connection with the Gaia hypothesis first formulated by the British scientist James Lovelock. As cybernetics has mutated and diverged over the decades, so have the descriptions of Gaia as a system. Lovelock and Margulis’s seminal writings were also the first to bring multiple lines of systems discourses and theories to bear on the Gaia concept. Margulis’s Gaia discourse in particular develops a systems theory of “autopoietic Gaia” and articulates an intellectual style of “Gaian thought,” an pragmatic ethics for planetary citizenship.

**Bruce Clarke** is the Paul Whitfield Horn Professor of Literature and Science in the Department of English at Texas Tech University. He is currently in residence at the Kluge Center of the Library of Congress as the 2018-19 Baruch S. Blumberg NASA Chair in Astrobiology. His research focuses on systems theory, narrative theory, and ecology. In 2010-11 he was Senior Fellow at the International Research Institute for Cultural Technologies and Media Philosophy, Bauhaus-University Weimar. In 2015 he was Senior Fellow at the Center for Literature and the Natural Sciences (ELINAS), Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg. Clarke co-edits the book series *Meaning Systems*, published by Fordham University Press.