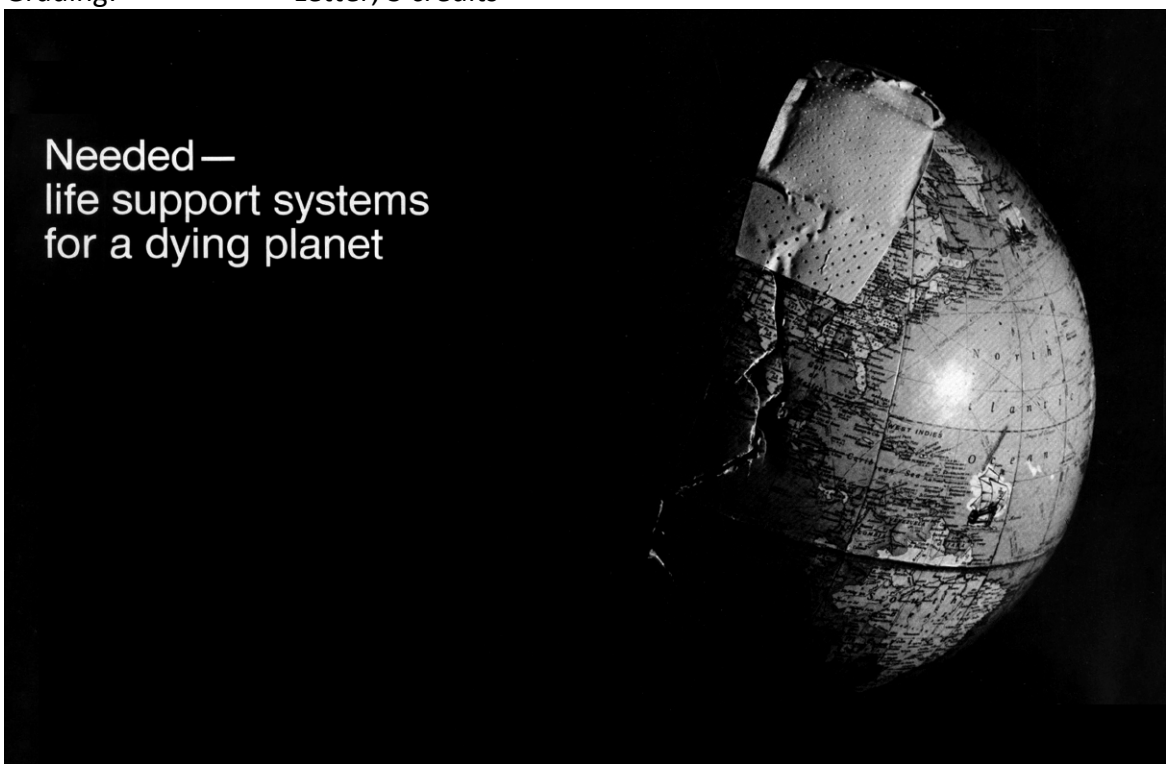
Arch 3308/6308 **An Ecological Approach to Architecture: Theories of Sustainability**

Fall 2021
Class location TBD
THURS 2.40-5.10PM
In-person

Instructor: Caroline O'Donnell/cao53@cornell.edu
Office Hours: by appointment
Grading: Letter, 3 credits



In the 1960s, as humans began to contemplate the earth as a precious and finite resource, the *Sustainability Movement* was born. In the above image, *Progressive Architecture* (October 1967) presciently advertises a forthcoming issue on sustainability, with a Band-Aid on the globe, reaching out to: "Architects and air breathers," under the headline: *Needed—Life Support Systems for a Dying Planet.* The text suggests learning from the technology handed down from NASA, considering the planet as a closed-loop system akin to a spacecraft. Since then, much of the literature of sustainability has followed suit: guidelines for pragmatic and technological solutions to control energy and material dynamics in buildings. Meanwhile, in parallel, the discipline of architecture has been driven by various key theories, including strategies for analyzing and reading buildings put forward by Peter Eisenman, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Colin Rowe, and others. Yet the two streams have not yet converged. Additionally, in the 21st century, new writings on the philosophy of ecology have emerged that may enable a portage between the two streams. **An Ecological Approach to Architecture: Theories of Sustainability** searches for theories of sustainable architecture that may serve to guide the future of a *meaningful* sustainable architecture. This class will involve weekly readings and discussions, guest lectures, and ecological redesigns.