

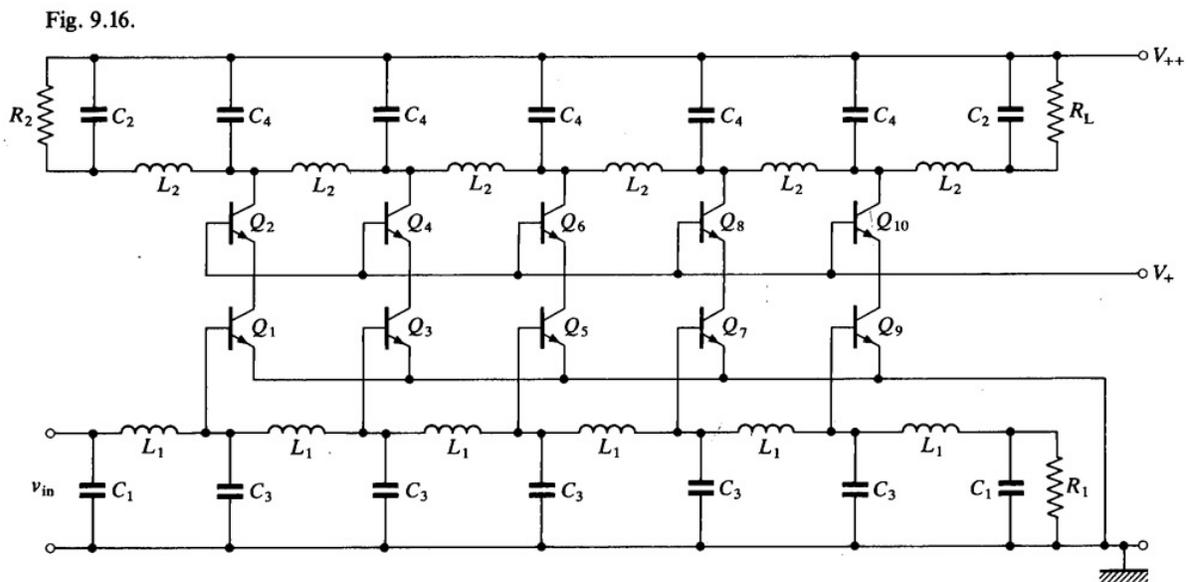
A note on style in electronic design

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2008 September 8

There is style in engineering no less than in art or literature. Some electronic circuits are like lyric poems; most are like army manuals; and some are like *Tristram Shandy* or Monty Python scripts.

One that struck me as particularly lyrical is the Tektronix distributed amplifier. It is based on a great insight – that the theoretical model of a transmission line can actually be built out of discrete components and amplifiers can be inserted into it. Both the insight itself and the implementation are very elegant, and one can see beyond the differential equations to understand the graceful interaction of many mathematical parameters.



Tektronix distributed amplifier. Picture from T. H. O'Dell, *Electronic circuit design: art and practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.