Le séminaire Invités du CSI accueillera

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“Precarity, Repair and Hope”

10 Octobre 2017, 11:00 -13:00 – Mines ParisTech, Salle St-Jacques

Discussion préparée par Loïc Riom, autour d’une série de textes :


This chapter is an exercise in broken world thinking. It asks what happens when we take erosion, breakdown, and decay, rather than novelty, growth, and progress, as our starting points in thinking through the nature, use, and effects of information technology and new media. Broken world thinking is both normative and ontological, in the sense that it makes claims about the nature of technology and its relationship to broader social worlds, some of which may differ from deep-rooted cultural assumptions.

Steven J. Jackson, Alex Pompe & Gabriel Krieshok. Repair Worlds: Maintenance, Repair, and ICT for Development in Rural Namibia. CSCW’12, February 11–15, 2012, Seattle, Washington, USA

This paper explores the nature and centrality of maintenance and repair (‘M&R’) work in the extension and sustainability of ICT infrastructure in the global South. Drawing from pragmatist traditions in CSCW and the social sciences at large, we develop a concept of ‘repair worlds’ intended to map the varieties and effects of such maintenance and repair activities. Empirically, our analysis builds on ethnographic fieldwork into local practices of maintenance and repair that have accompanied and supported the extension of mobile phone and computing infrastructure in the Kavango region of northeastern Namibia.

Steven J. Jackson, Syed Isthiique Ahmed & Md. Rashidujaman Rifat. Learning, Innovation, and Sustainability among Mobile Phone Repairers in Dhaka, Bangladesh. DIS’14, June 21–25 2014, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Acts of technology maintenance and repair constitute important and often overlooked moments in the operation of complex interactive systems. They also provide fresh insight on a series of problems – innovation, learning, and sustainability – long core to HCI concern. This paper builds on original ethnographic fieldwork in the repair markets of Dhaka, Bangladesh to advance three basic arguments: first, that repair activities in such locations reveal novel and significant forms of craft-based knowledge and innovation; second, that repair work is embedded in local and transnational flows that connect local practices to global networks and institutions; and third, that taking repair work seriously can cast new light on problems of learning and sustainability in the design and operation of complex interactive systems. We conclude with observations that relate our repair-based findings back to problems in interactive systems research and design.
This paper describes an integrated program of theoretical, ethnographic, and building work meant to explore posthumanist alternatives to questions around HCI creativity and design. We review recent theories in the humanities, social sciences, and HCI that argue for different ways of framing the relationship between human agents and the object world around them. We then describe a program of ethnographic work with artists who feature found and broken technologies as central methods and topics of work. Finally, we describe an installation and self-study project of our own, “Scale,” that extends these lines of analysis through collaborative acts of building with broken and discarded technologies. We argue that such integrated programs of work offer one useful model for leveraging the theoretical, ethnographic and material dimensions of HCI work; and that the distinct “propensities” of found and broken objects can challenge and extend HCI notions of creativity and design itself.