

CFP: Ethnographies of Everyday Technologies as Material Culture

Date : July 9, 2007

I am seeking proposals of original writings for a forthcoming edited book tentatively titled: "Mundane Stuff: Ethnographic Approaches to Technology as Material Culture." The deadline for proposal submission is September 1, 2007. Completed chapters would be due some time in the spring of 2008. Serious publisher interest in this book has already been expressed. The writing is intended to be classroom friendly, though the intended audience is comprised mainly of graduate students and scholars.

Studying technology as everyday life material culture means demystifying technology and methodologically approaching technics (i.e. material objects) and techniques (i.e. tactics, strategies) as pragmatic ways of attributing meaning to the world while simultaneously shaping it and being shaped by it. Such an approach calls for reflexive, creative, situated ethnographic research strategies which employ both abstract knowledge and mundane practices of meaning-making while attempting to understand both users and material objects.

I am seeking three types of proposed chapters.

1. Theoretical chapters which provide both an overview and reflection on one of the following analytical perspectives on technology as everyday life material culture: symbolic interactionism, actor-network theory, cultural studies, and phenomenology. Required length: 5,500 words.
2. Methodological chapters which offer both overview and reflection on the ethnographic study and representation of technology as material culture from the angle of one of the following approaches: performance ethnography, visual ethnography, narrative ethnography, analytical ethnography. Required length: 5,500 words.
3. Empirical chapters which focus on the reporting of original ethnographic research on technology as material culture. Possible topics are limitless. For example, they may include the study of domestic objects, means of transportation, clothing and other body-modifying/adorning objects, workplace objects, toys, landscape, etc. Approximate required length: 7,500 words.

If you are interested please submit a tentative title, 100/150 word abstract, and author bio to Phillip Vannini: Phillip.Vannini@Royalroads.ca or simply contact me to discuss ideas or ask for more information.

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