

Informational Governance (t)ethnography; study of making, practice and performance

Sietze Vellema, Knowledge, Technology and
Innovation group, Wageningen University
Discussion input for IPOP programme,
October 18, 2013



Where is the magic?



Tool

- New 'things'
- Code in the design



Making / practice

- Performance of daily life
- Skills / techniques to achieve an end



Research orientations

- **Object oriented** – tools, machines, stuff, hardware enthusiasts, **design**
 - Impacts of tools, machines on society
 - Focus on artifacts, gadgets, novelty (1st 2nd generation)
 - Innovation studies
- **Objective oriented** – processual, skill, situated action, handling errors, combined capacities to achieve a **practical end**
 - Use of technological means to achieve human purposes
 - Focus on functionality in performance of daily life
 - Knowing how to . . .
 - Descriptive social science of **making**

What practices can be observed?

Observe the performance of daily life



Pitfall:
 Very, very thick
 description,
 without direction


How to strategize your evidence? Technography

SKILLS

The use of skills, tools, knowledge and techniques to achieve a practical end

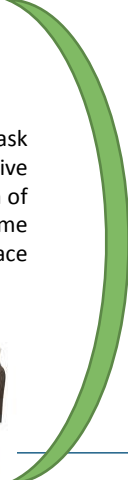


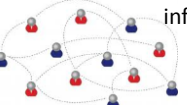


The formation of task groups and collective skills / transmission of information over time and space

Craft and skill-based organizations ruling behaviours / non-localised specialist groups regulating practices



Who selects recipes / solutions and how?

How is experimentation / performance regulated?

WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITEIT
WAGENINGEN UR

Case studies – identify bounded practice

- Detect and document the social and technical processes underlying the practice
 - Observe problem-solving activities and malleability
 - Observe how people and organisations make elements combine and handle errors and contingencies
 - Observe coordination, control and ordering
- Document sequence of instructive events for a defined time period
 - Triangulation of data / Selected events
 - Map blending of practices
- Identify intermediate outcomes
 - Observations at intersections where practices meet audiences and the wider social fabric
 - Change and continuity are closely related
 - Outcomes to do come about by design / building by trial and error